image

210

DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN

Golden

YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S IRONIC ABOUT ALL OF THIS? I THOUGHT I WAS LONG PAST BEING SURPRISED AT ANYTHING.

ANYONE'S BEEN DOING THIS GIG LONG AS WE HAVE-- THEY KNOW-- WE JUST SEE AND DEAL WITH SHIT THAT MAKES YOU UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE HAVE NIGHTMARES. I MEAN-- THE THINGS I'VE SEEN A PERSON DO TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING-- OR, HELL, EVEN TO THEMSELVES.

IT WEIGHS ON YOU SOME NIGHTS.

WE CAN'T BE TORTURED BY THE CRUEL ACTS OF OTHERS.

THIS WASN'T 'OTHERS'! IT WAS ME!

I SHOT HER! I PULLED THE TRIGGER!

I UNDERSTAND. THE QUESTION YOU NEED TO COME TO GRIPS WITH IS 'WHY'? WHAT DROVE YOU TO IT?

YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND.

UNDERSTAND WHAT? THAT YOU WERE TRYING TO PROTECT SAM. THAT SOME NURSE WAS ACTING CRAZY ON YOU?

NO. NO! THAT'S NOT IT.

THEN WHAT? TELL ME-- WHAT IN GOD'S NAME WOULD MAKE YOU UNLOAD YOUR GUN ON AN UNARMED WOMAN?

MY INSTINCTS!

DO YOU KNOW HOW MANY YEARS I'VE PUT INTO THIS CAREER? HOW MUCH TIME I'VE SPENT CHASING DOWN THE F@*KING DREGS OF SOCIETY--PUTTING MY LIFE ON THE LINE--SO THE COURTS CAN SLAP THEM ON THE WRIST AND LET 'EM DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN?

EVEN WORSE? THEY SOMEHOW ALL FIND A DATE. THEN EVENTUALLY PROCREATE. BRINGING A BUNCH OF KIDS INTO AN ENVIRONMENT THAT THEY'LL NEVER HAVE A CHANCE OF ESCAPING.

I'M MISSING YOUR POINT.

NO YOU'RE NOT...YOU'VE DONE THE SAME THING. THE ONLY WAY WE'VE SURVIVED THIS LONG IS BECAUSE OF OUR INSTINCTS! THEY TELL US WHEN WE SHOULD CHARGE IN AND WHEN WE SHOULD HOLD BACK OR BE SUSPICIOUS.

WELL, THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED AT THE HOSPITAL.

EVERY FIBER IN MY BODY WAS SCREAMING--"*SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT!" THAT SOMETHING WAS MESSED UP!* SO NOW I'M SITTING HERE WAITING FOR OTHERS TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO WITH MY CAREER BECAUSE IF I TELL THEM THE TRUTH, THEY'LL TAKE MY BADGE AWAY IN A SECOND!

SO--WHERE'S THAT LEAVE ME?

HERE'S HOW YOU SOLVE IT--

YOU LIE.

YOU'RE GOING TO TELL THEM THAT YOU MISSPOKE. I'VE READ THE INITIAL REPORT, DETECTIVE ROWAND--THE WRITE UP OF YOUR STATEMENTS TO THE FIRST RESPONDING OFFICER. IN IT YOU MENTION--AND I'M QUOTING HERE--"SHE WASN'T HUMAN."

DO YOU KNOW HOW THAT SOUNDS--"WASN'T HUMAN?"

LOOK--I WAS... I WAS STILL OUT OF IT. STILL AMPED UP AND I--MAYBE I WAS A BIT OVERLY-DRAMATIC--OR... I DON'T KNOW. I JUST--

THEN *SAY THAT!*

KEEP TELLING THEM YOU WERE RUNNING ON ADRENALINE. THAT "SHE WASN'T HUMAN" MEANS "OUT OF HER MIND." AND THAT "SHE ALTERED HER BODY" MEANT "SHE WAS INDESCRIBABLY VIOLENT." DEFINE YOUR STATEMENTS IN WAYS THEY'LL UNDERSTAND.

BECAUSE RIGHT NOW THE PRELIMINARY BLOODWORK ON THE DEAD HOSPITAL WORKERS AND NURSE'S CORPSE SEEMS TO BACK UP YOUR STORY. IF IT HOLDS UP YOU SHOULD BE IN THE CLEAR WITH REGARDS TO ANY WRONG-DOING IN THE STAFF MURDERS--WHICH IS THE BIGGER ISSUE AT PLAY HERE. THERE'LL BE CONSEQUENCES FOR YOUR ACTIONS BUT AT LEAST TRY AND MINIMIZE THE DAMAGE TO YOUR CAREER.

SO TELL THEM WHAT THEY WANT TO HEAR.

AND WHAT ABOUT YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

THE TRUTH, OF WHAT YOU *ACTUALLY* SAW.

THE NURSE-- AFTER SHE JUMPED ME, SHE RAN DOWN THE HALL TO THE STAIRWELL. LIKE SOME BROKEN WIND-UP TOY. AND BEFORE YOU SAY IT, IT WASN'T BECAUSE SHE WAS SHOT. SHE WAS-- I DON'T KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT, BUT SHE MOVED LIKE A HUMAN CRAB OR SOMETHING.

BY THE TIME I GOT TO THE ROOF SHE SEEMED NORMAL. THEN JUST BEFORE SHE JUMPED HER FACE CHANGED. I WAS TELLING MYSELF THAT IT WAS JUST THE SITUATION, THAT THE LIGHTS WERE PLAYING TRICKS ON ME.

THEN SHE JUMPED.

I KNOW IT WAS DARK AND SHE WAS TWISTING IN HER FALL. BUT...

BUT I SWEAR, FOR JUST A HEARTBEAT, I SAW SOMETHING. AND WHEN I DID-- AND THIS IS GOING TO SOUND CRAZY-- I COULD FEEL *EVIL*.

AT MY VERY CORE I *FELT IT*.

I BELIEVE YOU.

WHAT? *WHY?* IT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.

BECAUSE I'VE FELT IT TOO.

"AND THOUGH MOST PEOPLE THINK IT'S JUST THE STRESS IN THEIR LIFE, OR THEIR OVERACTIVE IMAGINATION IN THE DEAD OF THE NIGHT-- IT DOESN'T MEAN THE EVIL ISN'T THERE.

"OR THAT A *BOOGEYMAN* DOESN'T ACTUALLY EXIST."

AND WHAT...? YOU'VE SEEN IT YOUR-SELF?

YES.

YOU'RE SHITTING ME, RIGHT?

I WISH.

C'MON, TWITCH, YOU DON'T REALLY...

OH. MY. GOD. LOOK AT YOU!

YOU DO! YOU REALLY BELIEVE IN ALL THIS, DON'T YOU?

IT DOESN'T MATTER.

IT'S WHETHER OR NOT YOU DO.

IF SO, ARE YOU PREPARED TO DO EVERY-THING WITHIN YOUR POWER TO STOP IT FROM GROWING?

it's not working.

something's... wrong...

WITH...

huh?

someone there?

...MMEEEEEEE!

SOMEHOW, MY SUIT-- IT REACTED TO SAM.

JESUS CHRIST!

AS IF IT WAS PULLING BACK FROM HIM.

STOP FIGHTING ME!

LIKE IT WAS AFRAID.

SKKRRREEEEEEEEE!

THIS IS...

CRAZY!!

CONTROL!

I'M... IN...

NOT YOU!!

I DON'T WANT THIS ANY-MORE!

NOW GO AWAY!

just...
go
away.

DID YOU SEE HOW CONFUSED HE WAS? HE'S FIGHTING THE SYMBIOTE LIKE HE STILL DOESN'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING TO HIM.

THAT'S THE SECOND TIME WE'VE SEEN THAT. CLOWN SAID THIS WOULD HAPPEN. THE QUESTION IS, DO WE LET ANYONE KNOW?

WHO YOU TALKING ABOUT? CLOWN OR BLUDD?

BOTH OF THEM. AT LEAST ONE OF THEM IS GOING TO EXPECT SOME TYPE OF FEED-BACK, THOUGH I'M NOT INCLINED TO LET THEM KNOW WE HAD TO REGENERATE OURSELVES.

YOU THINK SPAWN KNOWS WE'RE MISSING?

HE'LL FIND OUT SOON ENOUGH. I'M MORE INTRIGUED BY HIS CURRENT WEAKNESSES. THOSE CAN BE EXPLOITED.

AND WHAT OF OUR BROTHER? ARE WE JUST GOING TO LEAVE HIM TO ROT IN THE DARKNESS WHERE SPAWN DRAGGED HIM?

THE SHADOWS AREN'T OUR REALM. YOU KNOW THIS -- AND YOU ALSO KNOW OF THE DANGER THAT WAITS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE LIGHT.

WE'LL WAIT-- AND HOPE THE SPAWN LEAVES US A CRACK WE CAN OPEN.

WHY'RE YOU DOING THIS, TWITCH?

DOING WHAT?

TRYING TO SAVE ME. TRYING TO CONVINCE ME I'M NOT CRAZY. WHY?

BECAUSE YOU SAID YOU SAW "SOMETHING." AND THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

DESPITE THE FACT YOU DON'T HAVE ANY ACTUAL CLUE WHAT I SAW?

THAT'S IT? THAT'S ALL YOU NEED FROM ME? JUST MY WORD?

CORRECT.

YOU STILL HAVEN'T TOLD ME WHY.

I HAVE MY SUSPICIONS, BUT YES-- I'M SAYING YOU SAW WHATEVER IT IS YOU SAW.

BECAUSE I'VE BEEN IN YOUR SHOES AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET THE "SOMETHING," WHATEVER IT WAS, RUIN YOUR CAREER-- OR YOUR LIFE.

SO I'M WILLING TO HELP YOU FROM LOSING BOTH OF THOSE.

AND I'LL GIVE YOU ANOTHER REASON-- ONE THAT I HOPE NEVER COMES TRUE-- IT'S SAM IF HE DOESN'T PULL THROUGH, I CAN'T DO THIS ON MY OWN! SO WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT, YOU'RE GETTING MY HELP.

HOPE I'M NOT INTERRUPTING.

YOU SAID WE WERE GOING TO BE ALONE.

WE WERE.

HELLO, TWITCH.

um... JIM?! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE? I NEVER TOLD YOU TO...

NEVER MIND.

DETECTIVE ROWAND-- I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET JIM DOWNING.

I KNOW WHO HE IS.

WHAT THE HELL IS HE DOING HERE? THE ENTIRE CITY'S BEEN LOOKING FOR HIM!

I HADN'T HEARD HE'D TURNED HIMSELF IN.

I HAVEN'T.

I'M HERE TO SEE TWITCH.

THIS IS BULLSHIT!

HE SHOULDN'T BE HERE! NOT NOW! NOT WHEN I'VE GOT MOST OF NEW YORK LOOKING TO FRY MY ASS. THE LAST THING I NEED IS TO BE ACCUSED OF HARBORING SOMEONE WHO'S WANTED FOR QUESTIONING.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE BETTER THAN THIS, TWITCH.

HE SAID HE'D HELP SAM.

WITH HIS... POWERS. YOU SAW IT ON TV. IN RETURN I PROMISED TO HELP HIM.

WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT THAT.

NOT NOW. I'M TRYING TO SAVE THE GOOD DETECTIVE HERE-- FROM HIMSELF.

SO, AM I BENDING THE LAW HERE A LITTLE? YES! HERE'S WHY-- JIM'S LOOKING FOR HIS PAST AND YOU CAME TO NEW YORK TRYING TO SOLVE A CASE. FAR AS I CAN TELL, THEY'RE RELATED.

EVERY CLUE WE'VE RUN INTO ON YOUR CASE, FOR SOME REASON OR ANOTHER, KEEPS POINTING IN HIS DIRECTION.

HOW AND WHY? I HAVEN'T FIGURED THAT OUT YET.

BUT I THINK-- AND I MAY BE WRONG-- BUT I THINK THE DEAD ENDS WE KEEP COMING UP AGAINST IN YOUR INVESTIGATIONS AND THE BLANK SLATE THAT IS MR. DOWNING'S PAST--

I THINK THEY'RE CONNECTED.

YOU'RE WALKING ON THIN ICE HERE. BUT MY OPTIONS SEEM TO BE LIMITED. SO...

YOU'VE GOT MY ATTENTION.

YOUR CASE HAS A CONNECTION TO ST. ANTHONY'S AND A HALF DOZEN ADMINISTRATORS FROM THERE BEFORE THE FIRE.*

*Issue 187--Todd

THOSE SAME PEOPLE WERE THE ONES RESPONSIBLE FOR DIRECT OVERSIGHT OF ME DURING MY COMA.

TWO ARE NOW MISSING AND THE OTHERS AREN'T TALKING. AND NONE OF THEM SEEM TO KNOW WHERE I CAME FROM. BUT TWITCH DID A LITTLE HOMEWORK AND GUESS WHAT HE FOUND?

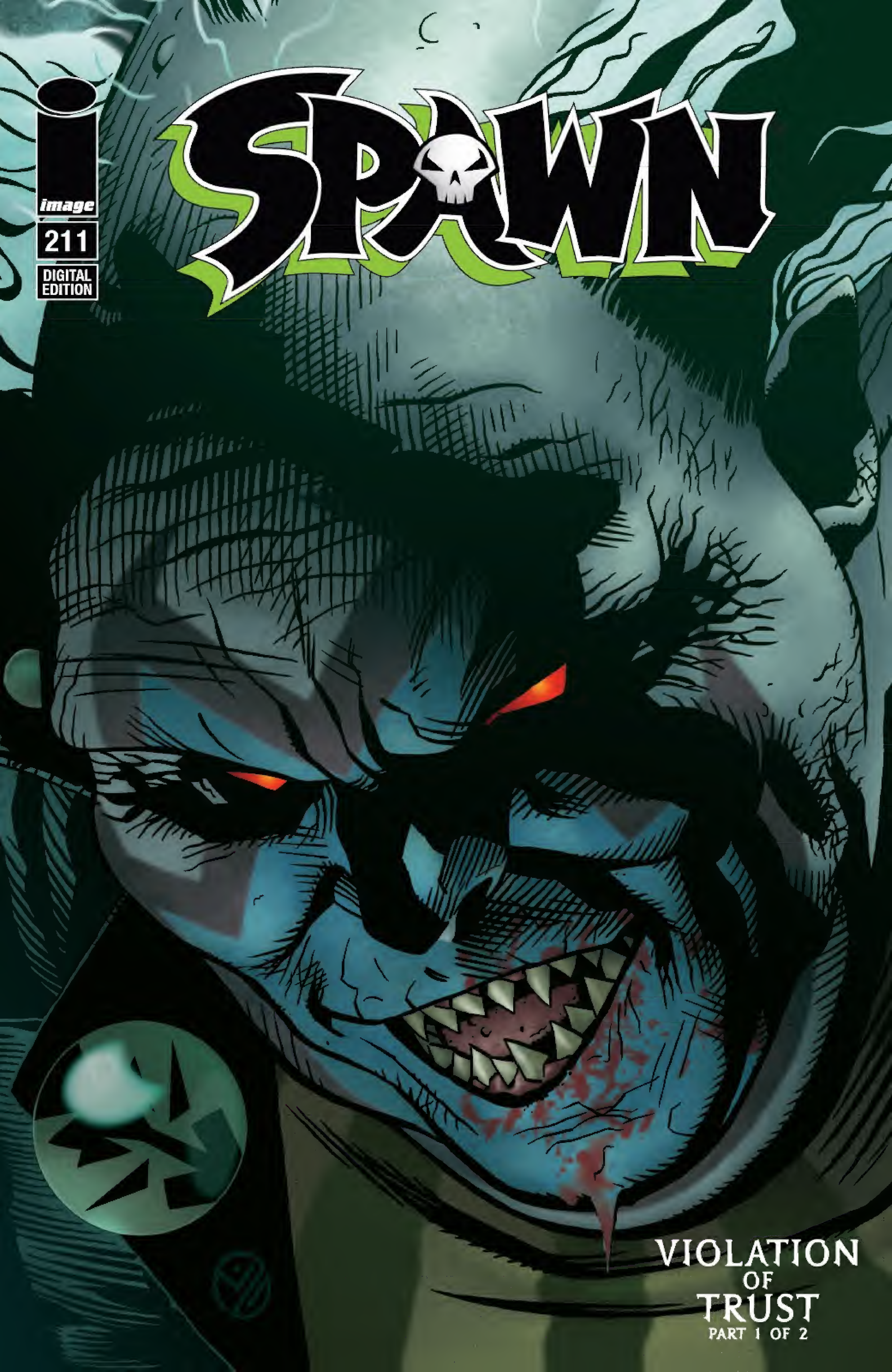
HUMOR ME.

YOUR SUICIDE VICTIM, BACK IN LANGLEY, SHOT HIMSELF LESS THAN THIRTY MINUTES AFTER JIM AWOKE FROM HIS COMA. THIRTY MINUTES! AND AS YOU KNOW, THE LAST CALL HE MADE WAS TO ONE OF THE PARTNERS OF ST. ANTHONY'S.

JIM WAKES. YOUR GUY DIES. AND ST. ANTHONY'S BURNS TO THE GROUND. IT'S TIME WE SEWED ALL OF THOSE TOGETHER.

LEFT THUMB
RIGHT THUMB

"IT'S TIME WE FIND OUT WHO JIM DOWNING *REALLY* IS!"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VIOLATION
OF
TRUST
PART 1 OF 2

HERE'S THE QUESTION WE NEED TO ASK OURSELVES-- AND NEVER MIND THE ANSWER-- THE QUESTION, IN AND OF ITSELF, IS REASON ENOUGH FOR CONCERN--

WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW IS-- WHY, IF YOU'VE BEEN INTERVIEWED BY VARIOUS POLICE AGENCIES ALREADY, HAS THERE BEEN NO RETURN ON ANY OF THE DETAILS YOU'VE GIVEN, OR THE FINGERPRINTS YOU SUPPLIED?

YOU TELL ME.

I CAN'T. THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

I CHECKED YOUR FILE IN THE SYSTEM-- GUESS WHAT COMES UP?

JACKSHIT?

SO TO SPEAK-- YEAH.

IT'S ALL BLOCKED. I CAN FIND YOUR NAME AND A CASE NUMBER, BUT THE REST-- IT'S BLACKED OUT. YOUR PRINTS. YOUR WRITE-UPS AND PERSONAL INFO. ALL OF IT.

IN FACT, I HAD TO DIG JUST TO FIND IT. WAS FILED UNDER "JOHN DOE." WITH "JIM DOWNING" LISTED AS YOUR ALIAS. DOESN'T THAT SEEM ODD TO YOU?

YOU'RE THE DETECTIVE. YOU TELL ME.

YOU'RE MISSING MY POINT!

THEN GET TO IT.

SOMEONE WITH THE POWER TO MANIPULATE OFFICIAL POLICE RECORDS-- WHICH, I'VE GOTTA TELL YOU, ISN'T AN EASY THING TO DO-- IS TRYING REAL HARD TO KEEP YOU IN THE DARK. TO KEEP YOUR PAST BURIED.

AND NOT ONLY FROM YOU, BUT FROM ANYONE WHO MIGHT COME DIGGING INTO THE MYSTERY OF WHO "JIM DOWNING" IS.

SO, WHAT-- I'M WASTING MY TIME WITH YOU?

NO. THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M SAYING. YOU'RE GOING TO NEED TO BE PATIENT. ANSWERS ARE OUT THERE-- SOMEWHERE-- IT'S JUST GOING TO TAKE TIME. BUT WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT IT.

SORRY-- THAT'S ALL I HAVE.

NOW, I'M ANXIOUS TO HEAR ABOUT SAM.

IT DIDN'T WORK.

what?

YOUR PARTNER... THERE WERE COMPLICATIONS.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN-- "COMPLICATIONS?"

IT MEANS I TRIED TO HELP HIM BUT MY POWERS THEY-- THEY HAD A VIOLENT REACTION TO SAM'S PRESENCE. ALMOST-- I COULDN'T TELL IF THE SUIT WAS PROTECTING HIM, OR-- IF IT WAS *AFRAID* OF HIM.

IS HE ALIVE?

HE'S FINE, I THINK. BUT HEALING HIM-- IT'S GOING TO BE MORE OF A CHALLENGE THAN WE THOUGHT, JUST LIKE TRYING TO FIND MY FILES.

I WAS AFRAID THIS MIGHT HAPPEN.

MEANING?

SAM DIDN'T JUST HAVE A 'NORMAL' HEART ATTACK.

I SHOULD'VE SAID SOMETHING SOONER, BUT I WAS HOPING YOU'D BE ABLE TO HELP HIM WITHOUT CONFUSING THE MATTER.

YOUR CRYPTIC BULLSHIT IS STARTING TO WEAR THIN, SO HOW ABOUT YOU JUST CUT TO THE CHASE.

THEN HERE IT IS... A DEMON-- GOES BY THE NAME OF THE VIOLATOR-- IS WALKING THE STREETS DISGUISED AS A FILTH-RIDDEN CLOWN ***AND*** HE'S HAD A SPECIFIC DISTASTE FOR SAM AND I FOR SOME TIME. HE'D BEEN APPREHENDED AND ESCAPED CUSTODY NOT TOO LONG AGO. AND LATER, WHEN I CONFRONTED HIM HE WANTED TO SEND ME A MESSAGE EXPRESSING HIS DISPLEASURE. SO, SAM'S 'HEART ATTACK'-- OR WHATEVER THE DOCTORS WANT TO CALL IT-- WAS CAUSED BY THIS DEMON.

AND I'M NOT SURE OF YOUR PERSONAL HISTORY WITH DEMONS, BUT, I BELIEVE THAT WHATEVER'S WRONG WITH SAM SOMEHOW COMES FROM THE ***EXACT*** SAME PLACE AS YOUR COSTUME.

ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT THIS CLOWN AND VIOLATOR CREATURE-- THEY'RE ONE AND THE SAME?

THEY ARE.

THEN YOU TELL ME EVERY-THING YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM.

RIGHT NOW!

TEN MINUTES LATER.

WE CLEAR? YOU FOCUS ON YOUR END OF THINGS. LET ME DEAL WITH THIS DEMON THAT'S RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAM'S CONDITION.

WE'RE CLEAR.

HERE...TAKE MY CARD. IN CASE YOU NEED TO REACH ME.

AND FAIR WARNING-- CONFRONTING THE VIOLATOR ISN'T AS EASY AS DROPPING AN OLD MAN FROM A ROOFTOP.*

*See Spawn #208-- Todd

BESIDES, I NEED YOU TO STAY ALIVE FOR SAM'S SAKE.

I'LL BE IN TOUCH.

HAUK

REPULSE!

SIMMONS

VIOLENCE

LOOK AT THEM...

GODDAMN VULTURES.

MARC?

ARE YOU-- WHAT'RE YOU DOING UP? IT'S LATE--

I KNOW-- COULDN'T SLEEP.

THEY'VE BEEN OUT THERE ALL NIGHT--

WHO? THE NEWS CREWS?

YEAH. THEY HAVEN'T LEFT SINCE JIM RESURRECTED THAT GUY IN THE STREET.* AND WE BOTH KNOW THEY WON'T LEAVE UNTIL THEY GET ***SOME-THING.***

I EVEN HEARD A BUNCH ARE HERE FROM OVER-SEAS.

SO WHY'S THAT A SURPRISE? YOU DID THE SAME THING FOR YEARS.

*See Spawn #204--Todd

IT'S... IT JUST FEELS DIFFERENT, YOU KNOW? BEING ON THIS SIDE OF IT. HELL-- WE'RE ACTUALLY ***THE STORY*** THIS TIME.

I THOUGHT THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED? ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU SAID-- THAT YOU WANTED TO "***MATTER?***" WELL, NOW YOU DO.

MAYBE. BUT, WHAT ABOUT YOU? AND SARA? JIM'S THE ***LEAD STORY*** HERE, BUT THE MEDIA MORONS-- THEY'LL TEAR THROUGH ANYONE TO GET THEIR HEADLINE. YOU KNOW THAT!

EASY! I'M NOT THE ENEMY HERE.

SORRY.

DID YOU GET AHOLD OF SARA LAST NIGHT? I FELL ASLEEP WHEN YOU WERE TRYING.

SHE'S STILL NOT ANSWERING.

AND JIM? I DON'T KNOW WHERE THE HELL HE IS, BUT...

THEN CALL THE COPS!

WHAT?

THE POLICE. JUST CALL AND TELL THEM--

TELL 'EM WHAT?

THEY ALREADY KNOW EVERYTHING! THEY'VE GOT TVs TOO! THE NEWS SAID THEY WERE ALREADY LOOKING FOR HIM. THERE'S NOTHING I'M GOING TO SAY THAT'LL MAKE THEM LOOK HARDER.

SO, WHAT? YOU'RE GOING TO DO NOTHING THEN? *THAT'S STUPID!*

JUST PHONE THEM. SEE IF THEY HAVE ANY LEADS ON HIM. IT'S BETTER THAN JUST WORRYING! HERE-- I'VE ALREADY DIALED THEM. IT'S RINGING.

HELLO?

HI. MY NAME IS MARC ROSEN AND I'M A FRIEND-- WELL, ACTUALLY, I'M THE MANAGER OF JIM DOWNING. THE 'FAITH HEALER'. I BELIEVE YOU'RE LOOKING FOR HIM.

IS THERE SOMEONE THERE I CAN SPEAK TO ABOUT THIS SITUATION?

VIOLENCE HAS ERUPTED YET AGAIN AT A NEW YORK CITY HOSPITAL. WE HAVE CONFIRMATION THAT A SHOOTING HAS LEFT ONE PERSON DEAD, AND AT LEAST ONE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER INJURED. OTHER DETAILS ARE STILL BEING CONFIRMED.

THERE ARE MULTIPLE REPORTS THAT THERE WAS AN EXCHANGE OF GUNFIRE BETWEEN A PLAINCLOTHES OFFICER AND A FEMALE HOSPITAL WORKER. JUST MOMENTS AGO MEDICS WERE OBSERVED AS THEY WHEELED OUT MULTIPLE BODY BAGS. WE'VE YET TO CONFIRM IF THEY WERE CONNECTED TO THE SAME SHOOTING INCIDENT.

THERE ALSO APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN A BODY TAKEN FROM THE TOP OF A PARKED CAR. ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT THE VICTIM FELL FROM THE HOSPITAL ROOFTOP. ANY CONNECTION BETWEEN THE GUNFIRE EXCHANGE AND THIS BODY IS UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME, AS IS THE SEVERITY OF THE OFFICER'S INJURIES. WE WILL UPDATE THIS STORY, INCLUDING THE IDENTITIES OF THE VICTIMS, AS NEW DETAILS EMERGE.

I'M NOT ***QUITE*** READY TO PROCLAIM IT ***THE*** HOT NEW LOOK, AS HUNKY MESSIAH-OF-THE-MOMENT JIM DOWNING--THE MYSTERY HEALER OF NEW YORK CITY-- HAS ONLY BEEN ON OUR RADAR FOR A SHORT WHILE. ***BUT,*** HIS ***STRIKINGLY*** LOW-KEY FASHION SENSE HAS ALREADY STRUCK A CHORD WITH THOSE IN THE KNOW.

ONLY DAYS AFTER MAKING A ***HUGE*** SPLASH WITH HIS STREET-SIDE REVIVAL OF AN INJURED MEDIA MEMBER, JIM'S TRADEMARK "HAT-AND-SUNGLASSES AFTER SUNDOWN" LOOK WAS ON DISPLAY AT CLUBS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. ***ALL*** THE COOL KIDS-- FROM HOLLYWOOD'S NEW BREED TO MANHATTAN'S WORTHY ELITE-- WERE DECKED OUT IN THE SAME LOOK, SENDING A CLEAR MESSAGE THAT THOSE WHO WANT TO BE NOTICED WILL BE DOING IT ***INCOGNITO.***

ON A MORE SERIOUS NOTE-- JIMMY, YOU MIGHT WANT TO STOP BY THE SCENE OF TONIGHT'S HOSPITAL MASSACRE. IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR MAGIC 'HEALING' TOUCH COULD COME IN HANDY.

DO YOU BELIEVE IT?!!

ANOTHER HOSPITAL ATTACK IN NEW YORK CITY!! VIOLENCE ERUPTED AGAIN THIS MORNING AT THE KAISER HOSPITAL IN UPTOWN MANHATTAN! SO FAR, HOSPITAL ADMINISTRATORS, THE COPS AND THE MAYOR'S OFFICE ARE ONLY WILLING TO SAY THAT "AN INVESTIGATION IS UNDERWAY." ***ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!!! WHY*** IN GOD'S NAME WILL ***NO ONE*** TELL US ***ANYTHING?*** WHAT ARE THEY TRYING TO ***HIDE?***

COULD THIS BE ***ANOTHER TERRORIST ACT?*** ARE OUR HOSPITALS, NURSING HOMES AND MATERNITY WARDS NOW UNDER AN ***ALL-OUT ATTACK*** BY ***AMERICA'S ENEMIES?*** THE ***RUBBLE*** AT ST. ANTHONY'S IS ***STILL SMOLDERING!*** WHAT'S NEXT? ***PRE***SCHOOLS? ***DAY CARE?***

HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO PROTECT ***OUR CHILDREN AND OUR FREEDOM*** WHEN ***THEY*** WON'T LET US IN ON EVEN THE TINIEST DETAIL? A LITTLE BIRDIE TELLS ME ***AT LEAST*** A DOZEN BODIES WERE REMOVED FROM THE BUILDING. ***A DOZEN! OR MORE!!*** LIFE IN THIS TOWN IS JUST LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF A ***HORROR MOVIE! STAY INDOORS! STAY TUNED RIGHT HERE*** FOR THE ***REAL FACTS AS THEY DEVELOP!!***

ELSEWHERE.

CLOWN!!

COME OUT. COME OUT WHEREVER YOU ARE.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

POLICE

POLICE

ROWAND?

UM, EXCUSE ME, DETECTIVE ROWAND?

huu--

WHAT, huu... JESUS!

WHAT TIME IS IT?!

ABOUT 4 A.M. THERE'S A CALLER ON LINE FIVE. TWITCH LEFT A MESSAGE TO PASS THIS ON TO YOU.

DID THEY SAY WHO IT WAS?

A GUY CLAIMING TO BE THE MANAGER OF THIS DOWNING CHARACTER WE'VE BEEN CHASING. HE THINKS MAYBE THE FEMALE LAST SEEN WITH HIM MIGHT BE IN TROUBLE.

SO, TALK TO HIM AND LET ME KNOW WHAT HE HAS TO SAY. BUT BEFORE YOU GET *TOO* DISTRACTED, I'M STILL WAITING ON YOUR FULL REPORT ON THE HOSPITAL HOMICIDES.* THE COMMISSIONER'S PUT TOGETHER AN INVESTIGATIVE TEAM THAT'S REPORTING DIRECTLY TO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE.

WE'RE ALL GOING TO HAVE TO BE PLAYING NICE WITH EACH OTHER FOR THE TIME BEING. IN THE MEANTIME-- WHERE'S TWITCH?

NO CLUE. SAW HIM EARLIER-- APPARENTLY YOUR CHIEF NAMED HIM MY PRIMARY BABYSITTER 'TIL ALL THIS MESS GETS CLEARED UP -- BUT HE STEPPED OUT. DON'T KNOW WHERE TO OR WHEN HE'S PLANNING ON BEING BACK.

GUESS I FELL ASLEEP WHILE HE WAS GONE.

*See SPAWN #207--Todd

IF YOU SEE HIM, TELL HIM TO CALL ME. I HAVE SOME DETAILS TO DISCUSS WITH HIM.

HOLD UP! YOU HAVE SOMETHING ABOUT DOWNING OR ANYTHING TO DO WITH MY OTHER CASE, YOU CAN TELL IT TO MY FACE! I'M SITTING RIGHT HERE!

THEN KEEP SITTING! YOU DON'T GET TO SET THE RULES, UNDERSTAND?

AND UNTIL I.A. CLEARS YOU OF ALL ***WRONGDOING*** IN THE HOSPITAL BLOODBATH, YOU CAN'T HAVE ANY INVOLVEMENT IN THE ONGOING INVESTIGATION. ***YOU KNOW THAT.***

YOU SHOULDN'T EVEN BE SITTING HERE UNSUPERVISED.

SERIOUSLY? YOU'RE GONNA PULL THAT ***CRAP*** ON ME?

I AM! BUT I'D RATHER KICK YOUR ASS AND MAIL YOU BACK HOME TO VIRGINIA. UNFORTUNATELY, SINCE YOU'RE THE ONLY QUASI-WITNESS WE HAVE, I CAN'T DO THAT.

SO, I'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THIS SHIT STORM IN A MORE PROFESSIONAL MANNER. PRELIMINARY REPORTS INDICATE THERE'S FLUID ON THE VICTIMS THAT APPEARS TO BE OF A FOREIGN NATURE, WHICH MEANS, I'VE GOT MY HANDS FULL AS IT IS.

WHATEVER. THAT IT? YOU DONE WITH THE LECTURE?

NOW TAKE THIS DAMN CALL AND LET ONE OF THE OTHER DETECTIVES FOLLOW UP ON IT. IN THE MEAN-TIME YOU'RE STILL A "PERSON OF INTEREST" IN THIS CASE.

JUST TELL TWITCH TO EITHER SEE ME, OR GIVE DISPATCH A CALL. THEN YOU CAN GO BACK TO SLEEP AND LET THE REST OF US CLEAN UP *YOUR MESS.*

AND...? NOW, YOU'RE GOING TO JUST LEAVE ME HERE? UNSUPERVISED?

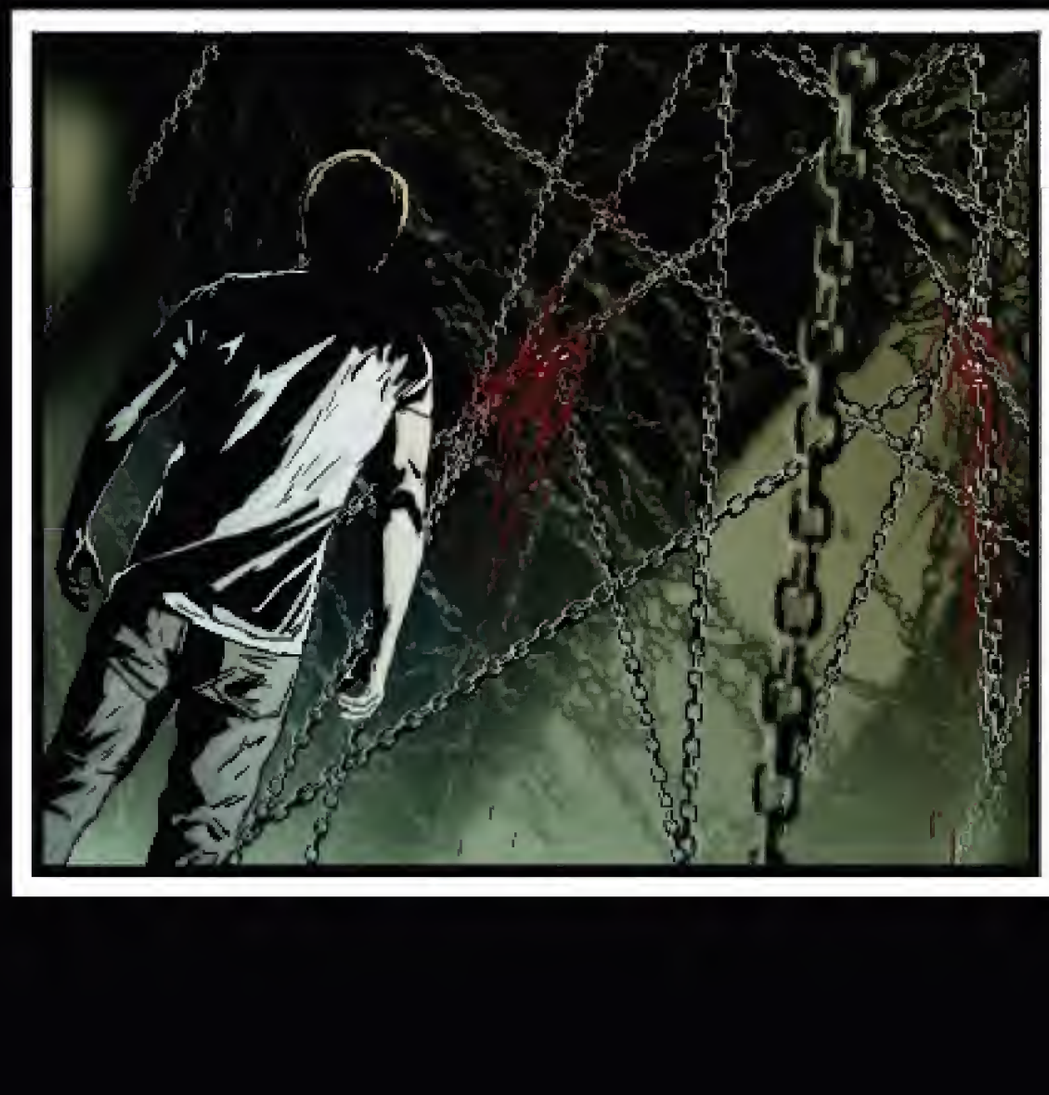
I'M GOING TO CUT YOU SOME SLACK.

BECAUSE IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED AT THE HOSPITAL, YOU PROTECTED DETECTIVE BURKE. AND I APPRECIATE IT WHEN MY FELLOW OFFICERS ARE ALIVE TO DO THEIR JOBS.

Twitch Williams
555-4532

CALL ASAP. DOING A FOLLOW-UP ON DOWNING LEAD. WILL BE AT MY HOTEL. ROOM 314.

SENDING...



CRAZY NIGHT, HUH?

I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU.

I KNOW. I HEARD YOUR SCREAMS. WAS THAT REALLY NECESSARY?

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?

NOWHERE IN PARTICULAR. JUST BEEN WAITING AND WATCHING-- FROM A DISTANCE.

AND THOSE VAMPIRES YOU HAD HANGING HERE-- YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW IMPRESSIVE THAT WAS, NOT ONLY DID YOU STAY ALIVE, BUT YOU *ACTUALLY* HAD THE UPPER HAND FOR MOST OF IT!

THOSE THREE WERE CREATED FROM SOME SERIOUS CROSS BREEDING OF VAMPIRES AND DEMONS. EVENTUALLY THEY BECAME HELL'S OWN VERSION OF THE 'SUPER SOLDIER'. KIND OF LIKE YOURSELF, EXCEPT WITH NO SOULS. AND SLOWLY OVER THE CENTURIES THEY BECAME MORE AND MORE RUTHLESS.

THEN IT BECAME CLEAR ***HELL'S ELITE*** NEEDED TO HIRE THEM BEFORE THEY BECAME VICTIMS THEMSELVES. SO, THEY SENT THEM ON EVERY UNIMAGINABLE MISSION YOU CAN THINK OF. AND TO THE SURPRISE OF THEIR BOSSES...

WHICH IS WHY THERE AREN'T ANY MORE ***DEMON ELITE*** IN EXISTENCE.

SO, IF YOU'RE SHOCKED THEY AREN'T STILL HANGING IN YOUR CHAINS... I'M NOT!

THEY SURVIVED EVERY MISSION. SEE, THE ELITE WERE HOPING THAT THEY'D FAIL ONCE, JUST SO THEY'D BE RID OF THEM. BUT THE THREE OF THEM FOUND OUT ABOUT THAT.

THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT HAS ASSURED US THAT OUR REQUEST FOR "COST CERTAINTY" WILL BE MET, REGARDLESS OF WHAT HAPPENS WITH THE EURO EXCHANGE RATE. PLUS, THEY'VE ACCEPTED OUR COLLATERAL IN THE BOND MARKET. CONTRACTS SHOULD BE IN OUR HANDS EARLY NEXT WEEK.

TOMORROW OUR LOBBYISTS WILL BE MEETING WITH THE REPUBLICAN LEADERS TO REINFORCE OUR POSITION ON THE E.P.A. ISSUES.

ANYTHING ELSE?

WE SHOULD BE CLOSING OUR RECENT ACQUISITION OF THE LITHIUM MINES IN SLOVAKIA IN ABOUT TWO DAYS. THE INTERNATIONAL REGULATORS HAVE GIVEN THE FINAL SIGNOFF ON ALL E.P.A. REQUIREMENTS, WHICH SHOULD HAVE US AT MAXIMUM CAPACITY IN ABOUT THREE MONTHS.

THAT'LL BRING OUR PORTFOLIO UP TO ABOUT 37% IN FOREIGN DIVERSIFICATION-- INCLUDING OUR MANUFACTURING INTERESTS.

ON ANOTHER TOPIC, WE RECEIVED A CALL FROM OUR CONTACT AT THE PENTAGON SAYING THERE HAD BEEN SOME INQUIRES INTO A "SPECIAL MATTER" YOU WOULD HAVE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT.

GOOD. DOWNING'S TAKEN THE BAIT.

I WILL FILL YOU IN ON OUR LATEST SHARE-HOLDER MEETING ON THE DRIVE TO THE BANQUET TONIGHT, MR. RAMUS.

PICK ME UP AT NINE. WE DON'T NEED TO GET THERE TOO EARLY.

NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I'M LATE FOR A MEETING.

ALRIGHT, GENTLEMEN-- WHAT DO YOU HAVE FOR ME?

THAT'S JUST IT, WE CAN'T TELL YET.

WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

IT MEANS, ***BLUDD,*** THAT YOUR NEW SPAWN SEEMS TO BE A LITTLE... um... INCONSISTENT.

INCONSISTENT HOW?

LIKE HE DOESN'T QUITE KNOW WHAT HE'S DOING ALL THE TIME.

ONE MINUTE HE'S HANDING OUR ASSES TO US...

...THE NEXT, HE'S BARELY ABLE TO WALK ON HIS OWN. BUT I'LL TELL YOU WHAT, YOU WERE RIGHT. WHEN HE'S ON HIS 'A' GAME IT'S LIKE HE'S POSSESSED OR SOMETHING.

ALMOST AS IF HIS PERSONALITY IS CHANGING. WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?

THE COSTUME. IT'S SLOWLY GETTING INTO HIS BLOOD-STREAM.

BESIDES STRENGTH, DID HE EXHIBIT ANY OTHER TRAITS OF INTEREST?

TRAITS?!

IS *THAT* WHAT YOU'RE CALLING THEM?

WELL OPEN YOUR EYES! HOW MANY OF US ARE SITTING IN FRONT OF YOU? AND BEFORE YOU HURT YOURSELF, THE ANSWER IS TWO! NOW ASK YOURSELF HOW MANY OF US YOU SENT OUT TO DO YOUR 'TESTING' ON SPAWN!

SO HIS 'TRAITS'-- F**CKIN' SWALLOWED OUR BROTHER!! RIGHT INTO THE SHADOWS. HE OPENED A ***GODDAMN PORTAL*** TO THE ABYSS THEN SLAMMED IT SHUT IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE. SINCE WHEN DID SPAWNS LEARN TO DO THAT? AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHY DIDN'T YOU WARN US?

I THOUGHT THAT'S HOW YOU GOT YOUR POWER.

BY KNOWING EVERY-THING!

IF NOT... WHAT GOOD ARE YOU TO US?

I'LL GET YOUR BROTHER BACK-- IF HE'S STILL ALIVE.

BUT IF SPAWN DID WHAT YOU SAID IN THOSE ALLEYS, THEN HE'S JUST EXPOSED THE WHEREABOUTS OF ***HEAVEN'S GATEWAY***-- THE DIRECT LINK CONNECTING EARTH TO GOD HIMSELF!

AND WHETHER HEAVEN KNOWS IT OR NOT, THEY'RE ABOUT TO BE **INVADED!**

YOU LIED TO ME!

ABOUT WHAT?

ABOUT WHO YOU ARE. YOU'VE BEEN PLAYING ME!

LET'S GET SOMETHING STRAIGHT-- YOU'RE THE ONE THAT'S ***CLUELESS*** ABOUT WHO YOU ARE, ***NOT ME!*** I KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I'M DOING. YOUR PROBLEM IS YOU'RE SO BUSY CHASING THE PAST YOU'RE MISSING WHAT'S IN FRONT OF YOU NOW.

ALL YOU HAD TO DO WAS ASK AND I'D HAVE TOLD YOU WHAT THE STAKES WERE FOR YOU AND I.

I DON'T WANT TO LISTEN TO ANY MORE OF YOUR LIES!

I DON'T CARE! JUST ***SHUT UP*** AND LISTEN. YOU MIGHT LEARN SOME-THING.

YOU'RE RIGHT, I HAVEN'T BEEN COMPLETELY HONEST WITH YOU. I'M A DEMON-- AND LIKE YOUR COSTUME, WE BOTH HAD THE SAME BOSS UNTIL HE DISAPPEARED.* EVERYONE THAT SERVED HIM THOUGHT HE WAS DEAD, SO THEY BEGAN TO DO THEIR OWN THING. WHAT ONCE WAS A TIGHT ARMY BECAME A SCATTERED BUNCH OF ROGUES. THOUSANDS OF THEM ARE NOW HERE ON EARTH-- BUT THAT'S NOT MY IMMEDIATE CONCERN.

OUR BOSS IS COMING BACK-- ***THAT'S*** THE PROBLEM. AND SINCE HE'LL BELIEVE EVERYONE'S BETRAYED HIM, WHEN HE GETS BACK TO FULL POWER HE'LL TREAT US ALL AS HIS ENEMIES... EVEN THOSE OF US THAT WERE LOYAL. BUT HE NEEDS TO COLLECT HIS POWER... PIECE IT TOGETHER BEFORE HE CAN BE AT FULL STRENGTH.

BUT I'VE STOLEN AND HIDDEN ONE OF THOSE PIECES. HE DOESN'T KNOW THAT YET, BUT WHEN HE DOES, HE'LL DESTROY EVERY-THING AND EVERYONE IN HIS PATH WHILE TRYING TO LOCATE IT. SO, YOU'VE GOT ***TWO OPTIONS***, EITHER FIGHT HIM ON YOUR OWN OR BAND TOGETHER WITH OTHERS.

THAT'S WHY I LIED TO YOU. BECAUSE I NEED YOU.

*Issue #100-- Todd

BUT I **DON'T** NEED YOU!!

THEN WHAT?!! YOU'LL FIGHT HIM ON YOUR OWN?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIKE ME, YOU ONLY HAVE TO *WANT* TO SURVIVE!

BECAUSE NONE OF US CAN DEFEAT MALEBOLGIA ALONE. ***NONE OF US!*** BUT I CAN BE VERY USEFUL TO YOU. HERE...

LET ME SHOW YOU!!

image

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DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN

VIOLATION OF TRUST

PART 2 OF 2

20 MINUTES AGO.

"WE THROUGH HERE? OR DO YOU WANT TO KEEP GOING? IT'S UP TO YOU.

"I DON'T MIND ***KICKING YOUR ASS*** A LITTLE LONGER-- YOU JUST TELL ME WHEN YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH.

"THOUGH I'VE GOTTA TELL YOU, JIM-- EVEN WITH THE FEW GOOD LICKS YOU'VE GOTTEN IN-- I'M GETTING BORED OF THIS ***SKIRMISH*** OF OURS. SO, WHY DON'T WE PUT IT ON HOLD AND CLEAN OURSELVES UP A LITTLE."

PLORP

SNAP

"I MEAN IN ALL SERIOUSNESS, YOU'RE REALLY SOMETHING SPECIAL. MOST SPAWNS WOULD BE A PILE OF *GOO* BY NOW.

"BUT NOT YOU. SOMEHOW... YOU'RE ***DIFFERENT.***

"THAT'S WHY I'M GOING TO BUY YOU A BEER! ***A BIG FAT FROTHY ONE!***

"AND BEFORE YOU SAY A WORD-- I WON'T TAKE *NO* FOR AN ANSWER. JUST GIVE ME A MINUTE TO FRESHEN MYSELF UP, IF YOU DON'T MIND."

POP

NOW.

SO... DID I LIE TO YOU? YEAH! I'VE BEEN HOLDING BACK SOME OF THE ***BIGGER*** TRUTHS ABOUT MANY THINGS. BUT TELL ME-- IN ALL HONESTY-- YOU'VE SEEN HOW DANGEROUS AND COMPLICATED YOUR WORLD TRULY IS-- WHAT WAS I SUPPOSED TO DO?

I DIDN'T KNOW YOU. COULDN'T TRUST YOU. NOT JUST OFF-HAND. NOT WITH WHAT'S AT STAKE. SO I KEPT THINGS FROM YOU THAT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT NOT ACCEPT-- AT LEAST NOT WHILE YOU'RE SO NEW AT ALL THIS.

BUT!... THAT'S THE PAST! SO, CHEERS TO YOU, PAL!

AND I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND MY NEW LOOK-- THOUGHT I'D TRY TO LOOK A LITTLE MORE PRESENTABLE-- CREEPY LITTLE CLOWNS TEND TO FREAK PEOPLE OUT. ESPECIALLY THE KIDS.

SO WHAT ARE YOU? A CHANGE-LING?

SOME-THING LIKE THAT. THOUGH I HAVE LIMITA-TIONS.

TELL ME ABOUT IT. I'M STILL TRYING TO FIND THE 'STARTS AND STOPS' OF MY POWERS TOO.

THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE AN UPPER LIMIT ON YOU YET, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL. WHICH MAKES YOU DIFFERENT THAN ALL THE REST OF THEM.

MEANING THE OTHER SPAWNS?

RIGHT.

SO NOW YOU THINK YOU KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT ME-- IS THAT IT?

YOU'RE GETTING AHEAD OF YOURSELF. WE CALLED A TRUCE BACK IN THE ALLEYS BECAUSE I SAID I'D COME CLEAN AND LAY MY CARDS ON THE TABLE FOR YOU. HOPEFULLY, YOU'LL APPRECIATE THE AWKWARD POSITION I FOUND MYSELF IN AND SEE WHY IT WAS NECESSARY TO DECEIVE YOU ALL THIS TIME. BUT YOU DO WHAT-EVER YOU NEED TO WITH THIS INFORMATION. YOU'RE YOUR OWN MAN.

AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT YOU SPAWNS KEEP TELLING YOUR-SELVES.

IN THE END YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIKE ME, JIM-- I'M NOT LOOKING FOR A FRIEND. I'M LOOKING FOR HELP AND YOU PROVIDE THAT IN SPADES. I'M GOING TO NEED THAT IF WE HOPE TO HAVE ANY CHANCE OF PREVENTING **MALEBOLGIA** FROM TAKING OVER THE EARTH!

'CAUSE WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT, EVERYTHING I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU IS TRUE. THE PROBLEM IS, YOU HUMANS DON'T WANT TO ACCEPT HOW THE AFTERLIFE *REALLY* WORKS.

NOT ME. I'M ON PINS AND NEEDLES.

SARCASM WON'T CHANGE ANYTHING, BUT IT'S NICE TO SEE THE MATURITY LEVEL I'M DEALING WITH. ANYWAY, HERE GOES...

DID I LIE TO YOU AND USE YOU? YES! IT WAS MY EFFORT TO GAIN YOUR TRUST BECAUSE I KNEW HOW YOU'D REACT IF I INITIALLY CONFRONTED YOU IN MY TRUE *VIOLATOR* FORM. INSTEAD I PLAYED MY PART BECAUSE YOUR KIND ALWAYS ACTS OUT OF ANGER TO THINGS THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND.

BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT WILLING TO ABSORB THE FACT THAT SOMEONE LIKE ME, ISN'T SO DIFFERENT THAN YOU. *I'VE BEEN CURSED TOO!* HAD MY IDENTITY *TAKEN FROM ME* TOO! NOW ALL I'M CAPABLE OF IS HOLDING MY TRUE FORM FOR A LIMITED TIME PERIOD.

DURING WHICH I CAN MORPH, SHIFT OR TRANSFORM INTO NEARLY ANY SHAPE AND SIZE.

BUT IT DOESN'T LAST LONG.

EVENTUALLY I REVERT TO MY CLOWNISH FORM AND SCURRY BACK INTO THE SHADOWS.

THE BIGGER QUESTION YOU SHOULD BE ASKING YOURSELF IS *WHY?* WHY WOULD I HIDE IN THE SHADOWS?

BECAUSE... I DON'T WANT THEM TO FIND ME. AND BY '*THEM*' I'M TALKING ABOUT HEAVEN AND HELL. IF THEY DON'T KNOW WHERE I AM THAT ALLOWS ME TIME TO CONTINUE PLOTTING AGAINST THEM.

SEE, HERE'S HOW IT ***REALLY*** WORKS. HUMANS DON'T GO TO HEAVEN OR HELL BASED ON THEIR ACTIONS HERE ON EARTH. IT HAS ***NOTHING*** TO DO WITH HOW GOOD OR EVIL YOU ARE. ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!

INSTEAD, EVERY TIME SOMEONE DIES, THEIR SOUL GOES TO THE SIDE THAT DIDN'T GET THE LAST ONE. A PERSON DIES, THEY GO TO HEAVEN. THE NEXT PERSON THAT DIES GOES TO HELL. NEXT GOES TO HEAVEN. THEN HELL.

HEAVEN. HELL. HEAVEN. HELL. BACK AND FORTH FOREVER.

AND BECAUSE THAT'S HOW A SOUL'S DESTINATION IS DETERMINED. IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES... DEPENDING ON EXACTLY WHEN THEY DIED, HITLER AND BIN LADEN COULD BE SITTING IN HEAVEN WHILE MOTHER THERESA ROTS IN HELL.

AND THOUGH THAT THOUGHT MIGHT DISTURB YOUR SENSIBILITIES-- GOD AND SATAN DISLIKE IT JUST AS MUCH AS YOU DO. SO FROM TIME TO TIME THEY TRADE WITH EACH OTHER. GOD WILL TAKE BACK MOTHER TERESA-- ***BUT*** HE MAY HAVE TO GIVE UP JACK THE RIPPER IN RETURN.

THE PROBLEM? GOD ISN'T ALWAYS WILLING TO SWAP THE MOST HEINOUS SOULS HE HAS FOR THE PURE ONES. YOU KNOW WHY? BECAUSE HE UNDERSTANDS THOSE CORRUPT SOULS SERVE A PURPOSE FOR HIM, TOO.

KRASHH

THIS IS *BULLSHIT!*

WHY?!!

BECAUSE YOU'VE BEEN TAUGHT SOMETHING ELSE FROM BIRTH?! BECAUSE ORGANIZED RELIGION PUTS A BOOK IN YOUR HANDS ON SUNDAY AND BRAINWASHES YOU INTO BELIEVING IT'S SOME FLAWLESS PIECE OF WORK?

THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACTS! YOU'LL SEE IT WITH YOUR OWN EYES SOME DAY. FOR NOW YOU'LL HAVE TO DEAL WITH IT AS BEST YOU CAN.

YOU WANT ME TO CONTINUE OR NOT?

KEEP GOING.

LIKE I SAID, GOD CAN'T TRADE AWAY ALL THE EVIL SOULS HE HAS FOR THE SWEET BINGO LADIES SATAN IS HOLDING. BECAUSE HE KNOWS THAT WHEN THE ***APOCALYPSE*** COMES HE DOESN'T WANT AN ARMY OF PASSIVE, POLITE SOULS. HEAVEN WOULD GET SLAUGHTERED. RAPISTS, MURDERERS, AND ASSASSINS VERSUS A BUNCH OF SOCCER MOMS ISN'T GOING TO CUT IT. GOD GETS THAT.

BECAUSE WHEN THE HOLY WAR BREAKS OUT, GOD WANTS HIS ARMY TO BE ***AS RUTHLESS*** AS HELL'S.

AND THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN. WE'RE NOT QUITE SO DIFFERENT IN THE GRAND SCHEME OF ALL THINGS.

I'M *NOTHING* LIKE YOU!

SORRY TO BREAK IT TO YOU, JIMMY-BOY, BUT YOU'RE WRONG! AND THAT LIVING COSTUME YOU'VE GOT STITCHED TO YOUR SOUL SAYS DIFFERENT.

ON TOP OF THAT, WE BOTH SERVE ***THE SAME*** MASTER!

HIS NAME IS MALEBOLGIA-- RULER OF THE 8th CIRCLE OF HELL. HE'S CREATED EVERY HELLSPAWN THAT'S EVER EXISTED... ***EXCEPT YOU***. YOU'RE THE ONLY SPAWN THAT'S EVER BEEN BORN OUTSIDE OF HELL. WHICH MAKES YOU UNIQUE.

BUT NOW HE'S COMING BACK AFTER HIS DEFEAT.* AND HE DOESN'T LIKE WHERE THINGS ARE HEADED.

IN FACT-- HE'S PISSED. FEELS BETRAYED. NOT JUST BY ME-- THOUGH I'M PRETTY HIGH UP ON HIS SHIT LIST AT THIS POINT-- BUT BY EVERYONE-- EVERYTHING.

AND YOU, MR. DOWNING-- YOU'RE GOING TO PLAY A BIG PART IN HIS PLANS. BECAUSE THAT SUIT YOU WEAR-- IT'S A WEAPON. HIS WEAPON. AND MALEBOLGIA, HE'S GOING TO COME FOR YOU-- COME FOR IT-- THAT SUIT-- FULL THROTTLE. BECAUSE HE NEEDS YOU TO BE HIS SLAVE.

*See SPAWN issue 100-- Todd

BUT THERE'S A DIFFERENCE THIS TIME.

NOW HE'S LOOKING TO EXPAND HIS TURF TO EARTH-- HE TOLD ME DIRECTLY THAT HE PLANS TO END IT ALL--TO BRING ABOUT THE ***FINAL RECKONING.****
AND LIKE A TERRORIST BOMBER, HE'S WILLING TO KILL HIMSELF IF IT SERVES A GREATER 'GOOD.' AND YOU, HE SAID -- YOU'RE HIS ACE IN THE HOLE.

SO IF I HAD ANY DOUBTS ABOUT YOUR 'UNIQUENESS' BEFORE, MALEBOLGIA CONFIRMED IT BY MAKING YOU HIS CENTER-PIECE.

HE'S NEVER USED A SPAWN TO ASSIST IN ANY DIRECT 'RETRIBUTION MISSION.' AND THOUGH HE'S ALWAYS FAVORED THOSE HALFBREEDS-- AND THERE HAVE BEEN PLENTY TO CHOOSE FROM-- NONE HAVE EVER ACTUALLY SERVED AS HIS MESSENGER.

DID HE SAY HOW HE WAS PLANNING ON RECRUITING ME TO HIS SIDE?

NO. BUT HE CAN'T DO **ANYTHING** UNTIL HE PUTS HIMSELF BACK TOGETHER.

WHAT'S THAT MEAN?

DON'T WORRY, I'LL GET TO THAT.

*See SPAWN #200--Todd

RIGHT NOW, THOUGH, I DON'T THINK HE EVEN KNOWS YOU EXIST. NOT YOU AS SPAWN-- OR YOUR COSTUME-- BUT JIM DOWNING THE PERSON.

I THINK HE STILL BELIEVES THAT UNDER YOUR SUIT YOU'RE STILL AL SIMMONS. THAT COULD HELP. YOU'RE NOW AN 'X-FACTOR'-- ON A COUPLE OF FRONTS.

FIRST, I'VE FOUGHT AND DESTROYED EVERY SPAWN THAT'S EVER BEEN SENT TO EARTH. IT DIDN'T MATTER WHEN THEY APPEARED OR WHAT KIND OF WEAPONS THEY TRIED TO USE AGAINST ME. I TOOK THEM ALL DOWN.

EXCEPT ONE. THAT WAS SIMMONS.

HE'S THE ONLY ONE THAT TOOK HIMSELF OUT OF THE GAME INTENTIONALLY. AT FIRST I THOUGHT HE'D FINALLY GONE AROUND THE BEND. BUT NOW-- NOW I'M NOT SO SURE.

HE MAY HAVE ACTUALLY KNOWN WHAT HE WAS DOING WHEN HE COMMITTED SUICIDE-- BECAUSE HIS SUDDEN DISAPPEARANCE AND YOUR IMMEDIATE PRESENCE HAS SHIFTED SOME OF THE GAME PIECES AROUND.

HE ACTUALLY MIGHT HAVE SENSED IT WOULD THROW EVERY-THING INTO TEMPORARY CHAOS-- CREATING A DISTRACTION BIG ENOUGH TO SNEAK YOU IN THE BACK DOOR.

WHICH MEANS THE SECOND-- AND MORE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE-- IS THAT, OF ALL THE SPAWNS EVER CREATED, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE TO HOST A SYMBIOTE ***AND*** STILL HAVE A BEATING HEART. THAT'S NEVER BEEN DONE BEFORE.

EVERY OTHER SPAWN HAD DIED IN THEIR HUMAN FORM AND BEEN 'REBORN' IN HELL BEFORE STEPPING FOOT BACK ON EARTH.

YOU WERE ON LIFE SUPPORT DURING YOUR ENTIRE COMA. AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, YOU ***NEVER*** DIED.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS EXACTLY, OR WHAT SIGNIFICANCE IT HAS TO YOUR POWER LEVEL, BUT IT'S DEFINITELY SOMETHING. THAT'S PROBABLY WHY MALEBOLGIA HAS HIS SIGHTS SET ON YOU...

EVEN IF HE THINKS YOU'RE SIMMONS, HE MUST SENSE YOUR NEW POWER POTENTIAL. AND IF HE FELT THAT IN HIS WEAKENED STATE AS THE '***FREAK***' THEN YOU AND/OR YOUR COSTUME MUST BE DAMN NEAR A WALKING ***ATOMIC BOMB!***

THE VATICAN.

THEY'RE ALL WAITING FOR YOU IN THE MAIN CHAMBER.

HAVE THEY BEEN WAITING LONG?

ONLY ABOUT TEN MINUTES.

GOOD. DO THEY HAVE THEIR REPORT?

YES. WE BELIEVE SO.

YOUR EMINENCE. THANK YOU FOR MAKING THE TIME, ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE. WE'LL TRY TO MAKE THIS AS BRIEF AS POSSIBLE.

AS YOU KNOW, THERE IS AN EXTREMELY PRESSING MATTER UNFOLDING IN AMERICA. ONE WHICH WE'VE BEEN MONITORING QUITE CLOSELY, WITH ALL OUR MOST RELIABLE CONTACTS, BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CHURCH. AND WITHOUT OVERSTATING IT-- WE HAVE GRAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THIS SITUATION AND HOW IT MAY AFFECT YOUR POSITION.

THIS "SITUATION"-- AS YOU CALL IT-- IS AN AFFRONT-- AN AMERICAN PLOY TO ONCE AGAIN DISCREDIT PORTIONS OF THE CHURCH-- AND WE HOPE, MR. KENDALL, THAT YOU'LL ADDRESS IT IMMEDIATELY IN ORDER TO DISPEL ANY--

Have you seen this man before?

1-800-Je

CNN

MIRACLE IN NEW YOR

ACTUALLY, FATHER-- THE INFORMATION WE'VE GATHERED SAYS THAT THE HEALER WE'VE BEEN INVESTIGATING-- A MR. JIM DOWNING-- ISN'T A FRAUD.

IN FACT-- THOUGH OUR INVESTIGATION IS STILL IN THE EARLY STAGES-- I'M GOING TO GO AS FAR AS TO SAY THAT THIS PARTICULAR "SITUATION" DESERVES YOUR FULL AND UNDIVIDED ATTENTION UNTIL WE'VE DETERMINED WITH SOME DEGREE OF CERTITUDE WHETHER MR. DOWNING IS WITH US, OR AGAINST US.

YOU TALK LIKE HE'S SOME KIND OF THREAT.

HE IS. TO EVERYTHING YOU HOLD DEAR. WE BELIEVE HE MIGHT BE "THE SECOND COMING."

THAT'S PREPOSTEROUS!

YOU HIRED US FOR OUR EXPERTISE AND NOW WE'RE GIVING IT TO YOU. WE'VE FOUND NOTHING TO DISPEL THE NOTION THAT ALL OF HIS ACTIONS AREN'T TRUE SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATION. AS YOU'LL READ IN OUR REPORT, WE'VE DONE AN EXHAUSTIVE FOLLOW-UP WITH SOME OF HIS DOCTORS AND MANY OF THE EYE WITNESSES AT HIS 'HEALINGS.'

OUR JOB NOW IS TO CONVINCE MR. DOWNING TO ALIGN HIMSELF WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AND GIVE HIS FULL SUPPORT TO THE PONTIFF. WE'LL HAVE A MAJOR PROBLEM ON OUR HANDS IF PEOPLE THINK THEIR NEW MESSIAH IS CONNECTED TO ANOTHER RELIGION.

YOUR HOLINESS-- WHAT IS YOUR COMMAND?

FIND THIS DOWNING AND TELL HIM HE SHALL HAVE HIS SALVATION IN THE NAME OF ***THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT,*** AND THAT OUR DOORS ARE OPEN TO HIM.

DO IT WITH AS MUCH SINCERITY AND HUMILITY AS YOU CAN. IF HE REFUSES-- MARK HIM AS A ***HERETIC*** AND ***ASSIGN HIM FOR INQUISITION.***

LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT-- THE DEVIL WANTS *ME* TO HELP *HIM* DESTROY EARTH. IS THAT RIGHT?

IN A MANNER OF SPEAKING... YES.

AND LET ME CORRECT YOU. MALEBOLGIA ISN'T *THE* DEVIL, HE'S *A* DEVIL. EACH CIRCLE HAS ONE OF ITS OWN. THINK OF IT AS SOME DEMONIC CORPORATE STRUCTURE.

WHERE'S THAT PUT YOU?

ATOP MALEBOLGIA'S SHITLIST.

LIKE I'VE TOLD YOU, I WAS HIRED FOR THE PRESTIGIOUS JOB OF TESTING AND TRAINING HIS SPAWNS. AT NO POINT IN HIS INSTRUCTIONS TO ME DID HE EVER SAY NOT TO CONSORT WITH MY ENEMY. LIKE WE'RE DOING RIGHT NOW.

THAT'S TREASON IN HIS EYES. PUNISHABLE ONLY BY MY DEATH. I'M NOT ABOUT TO LET THAT HAPPEN. NOT WHEN I'VE GOTTEN SO CLOSE TO MY GOAL.

THAT WOULD BE?

TO ASSUME HIS THRONE, OF COURSE. AND TO CONTROL THE 8th CIRCLE, LIKE I SHOULD HAVE DONE EONS AGO.

AS A BORN DENIZEN OF HELL, I NEVER FALTERED IN MY DESIRE TO SEE HEAVEN BURN OR TO REVEL IN THE PAIN OF MANKIND'S EVENTUAL FALL, BUT MALEBOLGIA'S METHODS WOULD PLACE THE FULL GLORY OF THAT FINAL VICTORY IN THE HANDS OF HALFBREEDS-- AND THAT, I COULDN'T TOLERATE.

I WAS LEFT WITH NO CHOICE-- IT WAS BETRAY MALEBOLGIA, OR ALLOW HIM TO FOREVER TAINT THE PURITY OF OUR VENGEANCE AGAINST GOD.

LET ME GUESS-- YOU WENT WITH OPTION 'A'.

FOR ALL THE GOOD IT DID ME.

I USED SIMMONS. I PUSHED AND PRODDED HIM UNTIL I HAD MY ASSASSIN. ONE THAT WOULD TEACH MALEBOLGIA A LESSON BY DECAPITATING HIM.

INSTEAD I'M YOUR NEW SIMMONS? YOUR NEW PUPPET?

NOT SURE HOW WELL THAT SITS WITH ME, CLOWN.

YOU'RE MISSING THE POINT-- STILL VIEWING OUR RELATIONSHIP AS ADVERSARIAL-- ME VERSUS YOU, WHICH ISN'T THE CASE. I USED SIMMONS-- AND EVERY SPAWN BEFORE HIM AS A MEANS TO AN END. BUT, YOU-- I'M GIVING YOU A CHOICE-- LETTING YOU DECIDE YOUR FATE.

I COULDN'T'VE HAD THIS DISCUSSION WITH AL. HE WAS TOO CLOSED OFF-- NARROW-MINDED. HE WASN'T ABLE TO LOOK PAST HIS OWN ANGER OR HIS MISGUIDED NOTIONS OF RIGHT AND WRONG.

WHAT I'M OFFERING YOU, HERE AND NOW, IS THE CHANCE TO BE ANYTHING BUT A PUPPET, BECAUSE, HERE'S THE THING--

SIMMONS WAS A MURDERER AND A BASTARD WHEN HE WAS HUMAN. HE NEVER UNDERSTOOD THAT. HIS BLACK HEART WAS THE REASON OUR MASTER CHOSE HIM TO START WITH. BUT HE SUCCEEDED AT ENDING MALEBOLGIA'S REIGN OVER THE 8th CIRCLE.* AT LEAST TEMPORARILY.

I ALWAYS THOUGHT SIMMONS' VICTORY WAS A LITTLE TOO EASY, THOUGH-- EVEN I FELL FOR IT, IN THE BEGINNING, BECAUSE THERE WAS A MAD SCRUM BY EVERYONE VYING TO GRAB THE MANTLE OF *"NEW KING."* IT WAS A BLOODY MESS.

AND LOYALTY BE DAMNED!

EVEN ONE OF MY OWN BROTHERS WAS WILLING KILL ME FOR A CHANCE AT THE THRONE-- BUT BEFORE I GUTTED HIM, HE WHISPERED SOMETHING. HE SAID, *"HE'S NOT GONE."*

AT FIRST I IGNORED IT-- BUT THEN THINGS STARTED POPPING UP. LITTLE THINGS. THINGS THAT SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN HAPPENING. ONLY RECENTLY WAS I ABLE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT IT ALL MEANT:

MALEBOLGIA WAS GOING TO BE COMING BACK-- *EVENTUALLY.*

* Issue 100-- Todd

THAT'S WHEN I LEARNED ABOUT HIS PLAN.

HE'D TAKEN HIS POWERS AND SCATTERED THEM RIGHT BEFORE HIS SUPPOSED DEATH. HE KNEW SOMETHING WAS GOING TO HAPPEN THAT DAY, SO HE PROTECTED HIMSELF-- *IN ADVANCE*-- BY SIPHONING OFF PIECES OF HIMSELF AND HIDING THEM HERE ON EARTH.

EACH PIECE BURIED INSIDE ONE OF HIS MOST TRUSTED SOLDIERS.

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THOUGH NOT ALL OF THEM WERE CAPABLE OF ENDURING THEIR HIDDEN 'GIFT.'

AND NOW HE'S BEGUN PIECING THEM BACK TOGETHER. EACH PART MAKING HIM THAT MUCH STRONGER.

THERE'S SEVEN PIECES IN ALL. SMALL HIDDEN FRAGMENTS WHICH, ALONE, MEAN NOTHING OF ANY CONSEQUENCE, BUT TOGETHER-- TOGETHER THEY MAKE UP THE ESSENCE OF A ***DEVIL GOD*** LUSTING TO DISPLAY HIS POWERS AGAIN.

BUT SOON HE'S GOING TO FIND OUT ONE OF THOSE PIECES ISN'T WHERE IT SHOULD BE. AND THAT'LL BE OUR CHANCE-- OUR ONE MOMENT TO POSSIBLY DEFEAT HIM. BECAUSE AFTER THAT, AFTER HE FINDS OUT IT WAS ME THAT STOLE THAT PIECE AND HID IT AWAY-- NOTHING AND NO ONE WILL BE SPARED HIS WRATH.

WHICH IS WHY THE PERSON NOW HOLDING IT DOESN'T EVEN KNOW IT'S THERE.

BUT THAT WON'T MATTER.

BECAUSE THE VERY SECOND MALEBOLGIA DISCOVERS A PIECE IS MISSING, IT'LL BEGIN. HE'LL DESTROY EVERYTHING IN HIS PATH WHILE HE LOOKS FOR IT AND HE'LL BURN YOUR WORLD TO THE GROUND. I'VE SEEN HIM DO IT BEFORE. IT'S WHERE THE SAYING 'SCORCHED EARTH' COMES FROM. ***NOTHING AND NO ONE*** WILL BE LEFT STANDING! AND I'M TELLING YOU, HE WON'T STOP UNTIL HE FINDS IT.

YOU DON'T WANT TO LIKE ME, FINE. BUT SURELY THERE MUST BE OTHERS IN YOUR LIFE YOU WANT TO SEE LIVE. IF SO, THEN *JOIN ME* ***DAMN IT!!***

THAT'S IT. THAT'S MY PITCH. I'M A F**CKER AND WON'T APOLOGIZE FOR IT. WHEN THE DAY COMES I'LL GLEEFULLY STAND ON GOD'S THROAT AND THANK HIM FOR ALL THE YEARS OF FUN HE'S GIVEN ME. FOR CREATING ALL THE HUMANS I KILLED ALONG THE WAY. AND I WON'T HAVE AN OUNCE OF GUILT ABOUT IT.

SO, THERE'S YOUR CHOICES. TAKE UP WITH ME-- AND MY ARMY OF DEMONS IN ORDER TO SAVE THE WORLD OR TRY AND DO SOMETHING ON YOUR OWN. WHICH IS A DEATH SENTENCE FOR EVERYONE! MYSELF INCLUDED! IT'S TIME TO PICK ***YOUR POISON!***

F**K YOU, CLOWN!

YOU WISH!

BESIDES, YOU'RE *THE ONE* THAT WANTED ALL THIS HONESTY BULLSHIT-- AND NOW THAT I'VE GIVEN IT TO YOU YOU'RE GOING TO WHAT? RUN AWAY? BECAUSE YOU'RE NOT *MAN ENOUGH* TO HANDLE IT!?

THAT'S RIGHT! BESIDES, IF YOUR BOSS--

OUR BOSS! YOU HAVEN'T BEEN LISTENING?! HE CREATED BOTH OF US!

FINE! IF **"OUR"** BOSS IS SUPPOSED TO BE AS BIG A THREAT TO YOU, ME, AND EVERY DAMN THING HE TOUCHES-- AS YOU SAY-- WHY WAIT 'TIL NOW TO BRING IT UP? WHY WAIT UNTIL WE'RE IN THIS POSITION TO SAY ANY-THING ABOUT ANY OF THIS?

AND BEFORE YOU ANSWER-- *DON'T!*

BECAUSE THERE ISN'T ANYTHING YOU COULD POSSIBLY SAY THAT WOULD EXCUSE THAT MISTAKE. SO YOU WANT A PARTNER-- FIND YOURSELF ANOTHER OF YOUR DEMON BUDDIES YOU KEEP TELLING ME ARE ROAMING AROUND.

YOU AND I ARE OFFICIALLY DONE!

I WISH IT WERE THAT EASY, JIM.

SO, IN KEEPING WITH THE THEME OF THE EVENING, HERE'S THE TRUTH-- IF WE PART WAYS: YOU GO LEFT. I GO RIGHT-- THAT WON'T END IT NOT BY A LONG SHOT. I'LL FIND NEW METHODS WITH WHICH TO MOTIVATE YOU. METHODS YOU WON'T LIKE. METHODS THAT MIGHT EVEN HURT THOSE WHO HANG AROUND YOU.

BY THE WAY, HOW ARE SARA AND MARC DOING THESE DAYS?

FINE. THEY'RE ***BOTH*** FINE! YOU'D BETTER HOPE THEY STAY THAT WAY.

OHHH! SEEMS I'VE HIT A NERVE. THAT SHOULDN'T SURPRISE YOU.

BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I DO, JIM-- I ***ENCOURAGE*** PEOPLE. GENTLY NUDGE THEM TO LOOK PAST THEIR EMOTIONS AND FACE THE COLD, HARD FACT OF REALITY. IF THAT DOESN'T WORK, THERE'S A HIGH PROBABILITY THAT SOMEONE THEY CARE FOR ACCIDENTALLY DISAPPEARS.

IT'S NOT SOMETHING I WANT. AND, BELIEVE ME-- YOU DON'T EITHER. I'M NOT MAKING ANY THREATS-- JUST BEING STRAIGHT WITH YOU.

AND NOT THAT YOU GIVE A CRAP, BUT AS MUCH AS YOU DISLIKE THE THOUGHT OF PARTNERING UP WITH ME-- YOU CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE HOW DESPERATE I MUST BE TO EVEN THINK OF JOINING FORCES WITH A SPAWN.

SADLY... NEITHER OF US HAS A CHOICE.

SO, JIM WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE?

I'LL HELP.

FOR NOW. BUT ONLY BECAUSE I STILL NEED ANSWERS. AND I THINK YOU'RE KEEPING MORE FROM ME THAN YOU'RE LETTING ON-- ABOUT WHO I AM, ABOUT MY POWERS. ABOUT ***EVERYTHING!*** BUT THE SECOND WE'RE CLEAR OF THIS MESS-- ONCE MALEBOLGIA'S DEAD, AND I HAVE MY LIFE BACK TOGETHER-- YOU AND ME, WE'RE GONNA HAVE ANOTHER ***SERIOUS*** HEART-TO-HEART TALK.

ONLY SEEMS FAIR.

WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME THEN?

TO KEEP LIVING YOUR LIFE THE WAY YOU HAVE BEEN. STEP AS FAR OUT INTO THE LIGHT AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN-- EMBRACE YOUR CELEBRITY. WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT, I'LL BE IN TOUCH.

IN THE MEANTIME-- I'M GOING TO TRY AND HEAD OFF MALEBOLGIA AT THE PASS. MAYBE I'LL GET LUCKY. BUT!... IF SOMETHING SHOULD HAPPEN TO ME, A MESSENGER WILL COME SEE YOU WITH FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

YOU'VE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION, JIM.

AND THOUGH YOU DON'T SEE IT NOW-- I'M ***TELLING YOU***-- WE'RE THE GOOD GUYS HERE!

ACROSS TOWN.

KNOK KNOK

MA'AM?

HELLO, MA'AM? MY NAME IS DETECTIVE ROWAND. I'M ON SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT WITH THE N.Y.P.D. AND WE RECEIVED A CALL FROM SOME FRIENDS OF YOURS WHO ARE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR SAFETY.

IF YOU'RE HOME, SARA, PLEASE OPEN THE DOOR. I'D LIKE TO CONFIRM THAT YOU'RE OKAY-- AND, IF YOU'RE UP TO IT, I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU ABOUT MR. DOWNING.

MA'AM? YOU THERE?

DON'T ANSWER IT.

I KNOW YOU'RE AFRAID, SARA. I SCARED YOU THE OTHER NIGHT. I WAS WRONG TO DO THAT. BUT I NEED YOUR HELP. YOUR SUPPORT.

I CAN'T DO THIS ALONE ANYMORE.

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

JUST COME WITH ME...

I'M ABOUT TO CHANGE THE WORLD.

image

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DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN

Two weeks ago.

C.I.A. SUBSTATION. NEW YORK CITY.

YOU ASKED TO SEE ME, DIRECTOR KURTZ?

I DID. THANK YOU FOR YOUR PROMPTNESS, AGENT KRUGER. AND BEFORE WE BEGIN-- YOU UNDERSTAND I'LL DENY THIS CONVERSATION EVER TOOK PLACE.

UNDERSTOOD.

BECAUSE AS FAR AS THIS DEPARTMENT KNOWS, OUR SUBJECT HAS ALREADY BEEN ERASED.

YES, DIRECTOR.

I NEED TO BE ABLE TO TRUST YOU EXPLICITLY WITH THIS SENSITIVE MATTER.

YOU CAN.

GOOD.

SO HERE'S WHAT WE'RE UP AGAINST. A SITUATION HAS COME UP-- ONE THAT COULD QUICKLY TURN INTO A HUGE PROBLEM. YOUR ***SPECIAL TALENTS*** ARE REQUIRED.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS, KRUGER?

YES, MA'AM. I'VE ALREADY BEEN FULLY BRIEFED ON THE "DOWNING" OPERATION.

NOT ***ALL*** OF IT. YOU SEE, TWO DAYS AGO, A MR. MARC ROSEN--

DOWNING'S PERSONAL MANAGER.

YES, DOWNING'S MANAGER. HE'S A FAILED REPORTER WITH MORE THAN A FEW MEDIA CONTACTS IN HIS BACK POCKET. TWO DAYS AGO, MR. ROSEN SENT THIS PHOTO-- A PHOTO NOBODY, MYSELF INCLUDED, SHOULD'VE EVEN KNOWN EXISTED, MUCH LESS HAD ACCESS TO. HE SENT IT TO A SELECT GROUP OF INVESTIGATIVE REPORTERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

WHAT HAD BEEN, FOR VERY SPECIFIC REASONS, A LONG DORMANT FILE, WITH A SUBJECT LONG FORGOTTEN, HAS NOW SUDDENLY COME AWAKE. I NEED YOU TO PUT IT BACK TO SLEEP.

I'LL DO WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE.

I KNOW YOU WILL. THAT'S WHY YOU WERE PICKED.

THE SEVERITY OF WHAT THIS PICTURE REPRESENTS HAS BECOME MY ***TOP PRIORITY.***

WHAT I NEED FROM YOU IS THAT YOU MAKE SURE THIS SITUATION COMES TO AN APPROPRIATE CONCLUSION.

Eleven days ago.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.

Nine days ago.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

Five days ago.

HOUSTON, TEXAS.

Two days ago.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA.

Today.

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND.

Now

C'MON, STOP WIGGLING. I NEED TO GET THIS TIE STRAIGHT.

IF I DIDN'T KNOW ANY BETTER, I'D SWEAR YOU WERE NERVOUS... THOUGH *I CAN'T* IMAGINE WHY!

CUT THE SARCASM. YOU'VE MADE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR YOU THINK I'M CRAZY FOR DOING THIS IN THE FIRST PLACE, BUT I CAN'T GO ON LIVING THE WAY I AM.

I KNOW. I'M JUST GIVING YOU A HARD TIME. DON'T WORRY, I'VE GOT YOUR BACK ON THIS. WE'LL MAKE IT WORK-- ONCE WE FIND THE FUNDING-- BUT YOU'RE RIGHT, IT'S YOUR LIFE, AND THOUGH I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT YOU'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH, YOU'RE THE ONE THAT'S BEEN PUTTING UP WITH ALL THIS CRAP, NOT ME.

SO I'M COMPLETELY ON YOUR SIDE.

THANKS. I APPRECIATE YOU SAYING THAT. REALLY.

IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'M GOING TO STAY BACK HERE WHILE YOU DO YOUR THING. I DON'T WANT THERE TO BE ANY DISTRACTIONS TO WHAT YOU'RE TRYING TO GET ACROSS. BESIDES, I'M ADDICTED TO MY PHONE AND CAN'T LEAVE IT ALONE FOR TWO SECONDS, AND I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO THINK I WASN'T PAYING ATTENTION.

THAT'S FINE. DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO. I'LL SEE YOU WHEN IT'S ALL OVER.

COOL! AND NOT THAT I'M A WORRY-WART OR ANYTHING, BUT I TOLD SUSAN NOT TO LET YOU OUT OF HER SIGHT. RIGHT, SUSAN?

AYE-AYE, CAPTAIN.

CUTE.

YOU CAN DO THIS, JIM. GOOD LUCK TO YOU.

I'M GOING TO DOUBLE-CHECK TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS SET UP PROPERLY. WE'VE GOT TEN MINUTES 'TIL *SHOWTIME!* I'LL DO A QUICK INTRO, THEN YOU CAN COME OUT.

DOES HIS NEUROTIC, PERFECTIONIST BEHAVIOR EVER GET YOU?

EVERY SECOND OF EVERY DAY.

I'M PROUD OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING, JIM. I DON'T KNOW IF I'VE MADE THAT CLEAR WITH ALL THE INSANITY SWIRLING AROUND. I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO SPEND ALL THE TIME I'D LIKE WITH YOU.

MAYBE... I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE LATER WHEN MARC'S OFF DOING HIS THING, WE COULD GET TOGETHER...?

LOOK, I'M REALLY FLATTERED BY ALL YOUR ATTENTION. IT'S HELPED MY EGO IMMENSELY, BUT WE CAN'T DO THIS. IT'S NOT FAIR TO YOU AND IT'S NOT FAIR TO MARC. IT'D BREAK HIS HEART IF HE KNEW WHAT WE DID.

I... GUESS.

THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO TO CHANGE YOUR MIND?

NO.

YOU'RE A WONDERFUL, VIBRANT, SEXY WOMAN, BUT WE MADE A MISTAKE. WE OWE IT TO EVERYONE NOT TO DO THAT AGAIN. DOES THAT MAKE SENSE?

YOU'RE RIGHT. YOU NEED TO FOCUS NOW. I'M SORRY.

DON'T BE.

HEY, YOU TWO! WHAT'S UP?

NOTHING MUCH. SUSAN WAS JUST WISHING ME LUCK. CALMING ME DOWN.

PERFECT! BUT YOU MISSED MY INTRO. THEY'RE WAITING FOR YOU!

I GUESS THIS IS IT THEN?

DON'T WORRY, YOU'LL KNOCK THIS OUT OF THE PARK. JUST TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND SPEAK FROM THE HEART. YOU'LL BE FINE.

GOOD AFTERNOON, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. I'D LIKE TO START BY THANKING EACH OF YOU FOR BEING HERE. I'M SURE ALL OF YOU ARE QUITE BUSY, AND I APPRECIATE YOUR HELP IN GETTING ACROSS WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SAY.

AS MOST OF YOU MAY ALREADY KNOW, MY NAME IS JIM DOWNING. THOUGH, TO BE HONEST, I CAN'T SAY WITH CERTAINTY THAT IT IS MY ACTUAL NAME.

WHICH IS ONE OF THE REASONS I'M HERE TODAY.

BUT, THE BIGGER REASON IS TO ANNOUNCE-- BEGINNING TODAY-- THE DEVELOPMENT STAGES OF A NEW FOUNDATION.

ITS GOAL WILL BE TO HELP THOSE WHOSE CONDITIONS ARE BEYOND THE REACH OF MAINSTREAM MEDICINE.

WE INTEND TO FUNCTION IN BROAD PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MEDICAL ESTABLISH-MENT.

INITIALLY, WE WILL CONSULT WITH A BATTERY OF SPECIALISTS, WHO WILL VERIFY THE SAFETY OF MY SPECIAL POWERS ON OTHERS.

ONCE WE GET CLEARANCE, I WILL CREATE A SYSTEM ALLOWING PEOPLE IN NEED OF MY ABILITIES TO BE CHOSEN FOR PARTICIPATION.

I'M DOING THIS TO GIVE MYSELF A PURPOSE IN LIFE... A PURPOSE I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR SINCE COMING OUT OF MY COMA.

SOME OF YOU HAVE REPORTED LATELY THAT I'VE BEEN IN HIDING. IT'S ACTUALLY BEEN MORE OF A PERSONAL RETREAT.

IT BECAME CLEAR TO ME THAT, BY EMBRACING MY NEW LIFE, AND EXPANDING ITS REACH, I COULD HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PEOPLE IN NEED.

LIVE CNR

IF THIS UNDERTAKING LEADS TO ANY CLUES REGARDING MY PAST LIFE-- I'LL CONSIDER THAT AS A PERSONAL GIFT.

I'D NOW LIKE TO LAY OUT THE BROAD PARAMETERS OF OUR PROGRAM...

HE'S REALLY GOOD.

deeDEET
diDEET

NOW WHAT?!

HELLO.

MARC?

YEAH. WHO IS THIS? I'M KIND OF BUSY NOW.

IT'S GARY... GARY WHALEN. AND, UH-- I WAS JUST-- *HEH*-- JUST CALLIN' ABOUT THAT THING-- THE PICTURE, YA KNOW? THAT PHOTO YOU SENT OVER--*

GARY-- SHIT. HOLD ON A SECOND, I NEED TO STEP OUTSIDE.

*See Issue 202-- Todd

SUSAN-- I'VE GOTTA TAKE THIS. I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

MAKE MY DAY AND TELL ME YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING FOR ME, BUD!

YEAH, MARC... I'VE GOT SOMETHING. SOMETHING *BIG!* BUT--

WE *NEED* TO MEET. IN PERSON.

MEET? GARY, I TOLD YOU I'M BUSY. JUST GIVE IT TO ME, MAN. *TELL* ME WHAT YOU FOUND.

I CAN'T. NOT OVER THE PHONE-- AND NO-- UH-- NO E-MAILS EITHER.

WHY? WHAT'S UP?

NOTHING. IT'S JUST-- YOUR FRIEND-- I CAME ACROSS SOMETHING-- INFO YOU'LL WANT TO SEE YOURSELF. ON THE PHOTO, AND SOME STUFF ON WHO HE IS-- OR WHO HE MIGHT BE.

YOU SERIOUS? YOU FOUND SOMETHING ON JIM? *SOMETHING PRE-COMA?*

YEAH, UM, YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT. ABOUT HIM AND THE WOMAN TOO. BUT I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS OVER THE PHONE. THAT'S NOT A PROBLEM, IS IT?

NO. NO. THAT'S FINE! THAT MAKES SENSE. SO YOU WANT ME TO COME UP TO BALTIMORE, OR YOU WANT TO HEAD THIS WAY? EITHER ONE WORKS FOR ME.

HOW ABOUT TOMORROW? I CAN BE IN TOWN-- LET'S SAY ABOUT THREE O'CLOCK AT GRAND CENTRAL. IN THE MAIN LOBBY.

OKAY-- YEAH, I CAN DO THAT. AND, GARY-- ***SERIOUSLY***-- THANKS A LOT FOR THIS.

SURE, MARC. NO PROBLEM.

ALL RIGHT, SEE YOU TOMORROW THEN.

I'LL BE THERE. BYE.

CLIK

I... I DID WHAT YOU ASKED. NOW, ***PLEASE***-- I'VE TOLD YOU I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.

BLAM

MA'AM? THE FINAL TARGET HAS BEEN ELIMINATED. ALL FILES HAVE BEEN WIPED. AND THE MEETING HAS BEEN SET. INITIATING **OPERATION: JUDAS** *ON YOUR GO-AHEAD.*

PROCEED, AGENT KRUGER.

...NOT BE TAKING QUESTIONS, BUT WILL FOLLOW UP WITH A PRESS RELEASE THAT WILL PROVIDE A FULL SET OF DETAILS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

JIM?

MR. DOWNING?

MR. DOWNING, PLEASE?

JIM?

MR. DOWNING?

WOW! THAT WAS IMPRESSIVE! YOU HAD 'EM EATING OUT OF THE PALM OF YOUR HAND THE WHOLE TIME. EVEN SAW A FEW FEMALE REPORTERS CHECKING YOU OUT.

HONESTLY, NO JOKING AROUND-- I WAS OKAY?

OH, PLEASE-- YOU'RE A NATURAL UP THERE. IT'S LIKE YOU CAST A SPELL OVER THEM OR SOME-THING.

THANKS. I WAS A BIT NERVOUS, BUT I REALLY APPRECIATE THE SUPPORT YOU, MARC AND SARA HAVE--

SPEAKING OF WHICH... WHERE IS SHE? I KIND OF FIGURED SARA WOULD'VE BEEN HERE TODAY.

SHE'S PRETTY BUSY, UPSTATE. I HAVEN'T TALKED TO HER SINCE LAST WEEK.

A week earlier.

SARA...?

WHAT'S WRONG?

YOUR POWERS. HOW CAN YOU CONTROL SOMETHING WHEN YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW IT WORKS? NOT THE GOOD STUFF. NOT THE SAVING PEOPLE'S LIVES STUFF.

THE DARK PART. THE THING YOU TOOK ME INTO. WHERE'S THAT COME FROM?

IF YOU'RE ASKING HOW IT ALL WORKS-- YOU'RE RIGHT, I DON'T KNOW. NOT EVERYTHING. BUT I CAN'T LET THAT STOP ME.

I'M NOT WILLING TO WAIT AROUND WHILE EVERYONE TRIES TO CHASE US DOWN-- TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THE HELL I AM.

DID YOU HEAR ME?

I SAID I WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. I WANT TO USE MY POWERS FOR SOMETHING GOOD.

WHY?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, *WHY?* BECAUSE IF I DON'T, THEY WON'T REST UNTIL THEY GET THEIR STORY!

I'M NOT WILLING TO PUT YOU THROUGH ANY MORE OF THIS. AND ON TOP OF THAT, IF I DON'T DO SOMETHING FOR MYSELF I'LL GO INSANE! I NEED TO DEFUSE THIS.

BUT I CAN'T DO IT ALONE. I NEED...

I'M LEAVING.

WHAT? WHY?

THERE'S A JOB-- IT'S OUT OF TOWN. I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIND STEADY WORK SINCE THE HOSPITAL BURNED DOWN AND THIS PLACE, THEY'RE WILLING TO GIVE ME FULL-TIME WORK. AT LEAST ON A TRIAL BASIS.

WHEN ARE YOU COMING BACK?

WHEN IT'S TIME. GOD WILL LET ME KNOW.

THIS IS BECAUSE OF ME, ISN'T IT? AND WHAT I DID TO YOU?

NO. YES. I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.

WHEN YOU WERE IN YOUR COMA, I DREAMED ABOUT YOU EVERY NIGHT. I PRAYED TO GOD THAT HE WOULD WATCH OVER YOU AND DELIVER YOU BACK TO US, BECAUSE IN MY HEART I KNEW YOU WERE SPECIAL. THAT YOU WEREN'T LIKE THE REST. BUT-- AND I HATE MYSELF FOR SAYING THIS-- THERE'S SOMETHING NOT QUITE RIGHT ABOUT ALL OF THIS.

WHAT YOU DID THE OTHER NIGHT...TAKING US FROM THE ALLEYS BACK TO HERE?! WHAT YOU DID... THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! AND I CAN'T FIGURE OUT IF THAT'S A GOOD OR BAD THING.

HOW DOES ALL THIS WORK? YOUR GUESS IS AS GOOD AS MINE. IT JUST DOES. I WAS TRYING TO PROTECT YOU. NOT SCARE YOU.

BUT YOU DID.

I KNOW. AND I'LL HAVE TO LIVE WITH MYSELF, KNOWING HOW MUCH PAIN I'M PUTTING YOU THROUGH. BUT IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL ANY BETTER-- SOME OF THE STUFF I CAN DO SCARES THE CRAP OUT OF ME, TOO. TO THE POINT WHERE I CAN'T SLEEP AT NIGHT.

AND IF I DON'T DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT, I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH MORE I'M GOING TO BE ABLE TO TAKE. YOU'VE TOLD ME THAT YOU THINK OF YOURSELF AS AN OUTSIDER. WELL, I AM TOO. BECAUSE I UNDERSTAND HOW LONELY THAT CAN BE.

SO YOU F*CKED HER TOO, THEN?*

WHAT?!

SARA'S NOT TALKING TO YOU, SO I'M GUESSING YOU DID THE 'PUMP AND DUMP' WITH HER TOO. SEEMS TO BE YOUR M.O.

BUT THAT'S FINE. I'M NOT JEALOUS. WE CAN SHARE YOU.

*Issue 202--Todd

SHARE?

LOOK, SUSAN, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR HEAD, BUT YOU AND I ARE OVER. WHAT WE--

JIM? OH MY GOD, MAN-- THAT WAS-- YOU NAILED IT!

WHERE'D YOU RUN OFF TO?

FIRST-- I DIDN'T RUN OFF. I'M ALREADY GETTING PRESS HITS FOR INTERVIEWS AND EXCLUSIVES. THAT'S WHAT THAT CALL WAS. I STEPPED OUT BEFORE MY PHONE STARTED BLOWING UP.

SECOND-- I'M NOT SURE IF ANY OF US KNOWS HOW CRAZY THINGS ARE GOING TO GET FROM HERE ON OUT. MY BIGGEST CONCERN IS, I STILL DON'T KNOW HOW WE'RE GOING TO PULL THIS OFF. THE MONEY ALONE--

I'VE GOT IT COVERED, MARC.

SO YOU'VE SAID AND I BELIEVE YOU, BUT-- ARE WE GOING TO OPEN UP AN ACCOUNT AND ACCEPT DONATIONS? BECAUSE WITH YOUR ABILITIES, THE CASH WILL COME ROLLING IN, BUT--

I ALREADY TOLD YOU-- NO CHARITABLE DONATIONS-- NOT UNTIL WE'RE ESTABLISHED.

ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU WANT TO DO THIS WITHOUT CASH? WAKE UP! BECAUSE IF THAT'S TRUE, THEN THAT FOUNDATION YOU JUST ANNOUNCED TO THE WORLD? IT *CAN'T* EXIST!

I'VE GOT IT COVERED.

YEAH-- ALL RIGHT. THOUGH AT ANY POINT ARE YOU PLANNING ON FILLING ME IN ON JUST HOW THIS IS GOING TO COME TOGETHER?

EVENTUALLY. FOR NOW-- YOU HANDLE THE PRESS AND TAKE YOUR PHONE CALLS.

I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE BUSINESS.

WHAT THE HELL DOES THAT MEAN?

THE VOID.

YOUR FAILURE TO KILL ME WAS A MISTAKE.* NOW YOU'RE SURROUNDED.

*See Issue 206--TODD

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE... NOWHERE?

TO BE ISOLATED *FROM EVERY-THING?*

COWARD! SHOW YOURSELF! OR ARE YOU *AFRAID?*

YOU'RE THE ONE THAT NEEDS TO BE AFRAID, NOT ME.

RIGHT NOW, YOU AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE A TALK. YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT ***BLUDD.*** HIS PLANS. HIS MOTIVES. EVERYTHING!

AND WHEN YOU'RE DONE-- I'M GOING TO HURT YOU. REAL BAD.

SO MY ONLY QUESTION IS, HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT TO SUFFER? THE MORE DETAILS YOU GIVE ME, THE LESS PAIN. YOU CHOOSE. AND IN ALL HONESTY, I HOPE TO HELL YOU GET DEFIANT AND CLAM UP ON ME-- BECAUSE I'D LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN TO TAKE OUT ***ALL MY FRUSTRATIONS*** ON YOU!

SO... WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE, DEMON?

London, England.

I STILL DON'T THINK IT'S FAIR WE LEFT YOU WITH SUCH A MESS.

GO ON. I CAN HANDLE A LITTLE RUBBISH. I'M JUST THANKFUL FOR WHAT YOU LADIES DID FOR ME TONIGHT.

OUR PLEASURE, SWEETY. WE KNOW IT'S BEEN ROUGH ON YOU SINCE JOHN'S PASSING-- SO IT'S THE LEAST WE COULD DO.

BESIDES, HOW ELSE ARE WE GOING TO BE ABLE TO HANG OUT WITH A BABY, SINCE WE'RE ALL JUST SEX DEPRAVED OLD MAIDS THESE DAYS ANYWAY...?

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, PAM.

EXCUSE ME... I FORGOT ABOUT OUR LITTLE ONE-NIGHT-STAND-NYMPHO-QUEEN OVER HERE. ≒GIGGLE≒

THAT REMINDS ME... I HAVEN'T HAD A ROMP TONIGHT. CAN YOU DROP ME AT THE PUB DOWN THE STREET?

SHHHH! YOU'RE WAKING THE NEIGHBORS. THEY'LL GLARE AT ME TOMORROW.

G'NIGHT, MARCIE. WE LOVE YOU.

G'NIGHT.

CONGRATULATION IT'S A GIRL!

THOUGHT HE COULD ESCAPE. DIDN'T HE?

unh?

BUT WE HAD A PACT.

SLEEP-EZ

MY... GOD.

A FRIEND. OF YOUR LATE HUSBAND.

YOU SEE, I GAVE JOHN SOMETHING TO HIDE FOR ME...

WHO ARE YOU...?

I NEED IT BACK, NOW.

AND WHAT JOHN NEVER WANTED TO ACKNOWLEDGE WAS THAT HIS SUICIDE MAY HAVE ENDED *HIS* OBLIGATION, BUT IT DIDN'T PREVENT HIM FROM PASSING MY HIDDEN TREASURE ALONG TO SOMEONE ELSE.

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, LITTLE JENNIE?

next issue: The BETRAYAL

image

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DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN

FINALLY! WHERE'VE YOU BEEN, JIM? I'VE BEEN TRYING TO REACH YOU FOR TWO HOURS!

A MEETING? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHERE ARE YOU?

I TOLD YOU I WAS GOING TO A MEETING.

NO PLACE-- I'M JUST TAKING CARE OF SOME-THING.

DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH TRYING TO GET MONEY FOR YOUR FOUNDA-TION?

I TOLD YOU I WAS GOING TO TAKE CARE OF IT, MARC.

LOOK, I DON'T WANT TO HASSLE YOU BUT THE LEAST YOU CAN DO IS TELL ME WHERE YOU'RE AT. DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THE BEST WAY FOR US TO GET THIS FOUNDATION OFF THE GROUND IS TO HIDE THINGS FROM EACH OTHER.

I'M MEETING WITH RAMUS.

WHAT?!

WHY THE HELL ARE YOU BACK THERE? LAST TIME WE WENT YOU STORMED OUT OF HIS OFFICE LIKE HE'D INSULTED YOUR MOM OR SOMETHING.* WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HE'LL SEE YOU AGAIN... *OR* EVEN GIVE YOU A NICKEL AFTER YOU TOLD HIM TO ***SHOVE*** HIS LAST OFFER?

*Issue 202-- Todd

IF YOU'D TAKEN HIS SPONSORSHIP MONEY, YOU'D ALREADY HAVE ALL THE CAPITAL YOU'D NEED.

BUT THEN I'D BE BEHOLDEN TO HIM AND HIS CORPORATION. I DON'T NEED THAT. I JUST WANT HIS CASH-- NO STRINGS ATTACHED.

Hot Dogs!

SO, YOU'RE GOING TO ASK HIM TO GIVE YOU 'MONEY FOR NOTHING.'

SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

THAT'S SOME KING SIZED BALLS YOU'VE GOT! WISH I HAD A PAIR LIKE THAT.

THIS SHOULDN'T TAKE TOO LONG. I'LL CALL YOU WHEN I'M DONE. YOU STILL HEADING TO YOUR MEETING?

YEAH. MY CONTACT SAID HE HAD SOMETHING FOR US. HERE'S HOPING HE FOUND OUT WHO YOUR BRIDE IS IN THAT PHOTO.

MR. DOWNING? MR. RAMUS IS READY TO SEE YOU NOW. SO, IF YOU'LL PLEASE END YOUR CALL, I CAN SHOW YOU IN. MR. RAMUS' SCHEDULE IS QUITE PACKED TODAY AND SINCE YOU DIDN'T GIVE US THE COURTESY OF ADVANCE WARNING, I'M AFRAID HE WON'T HAVE MUCH TIME BETWEEN HIS OTHER MEETINGS.

YEAH-- SURE. JUST A SECOND!

MARC, WHEN YOU MEET YOUR GUY, BESIDES GETTING WHATEVER INFO HE HAS ON MY WIFE-- ASK HIM WHERE HE GOT HIS INFO. YOU GOT IT? THAT'S IMPORTANT. I WANT TO KNOW WHERE ANY TRAIL OF INFORMATION IS COMING FROM SO I CAN GO BACK TO THE SAME PEOPLE IF I NEED TO.

I'LL TRY. SOMETIMES THESE GUYS LIKE TO PROTECT THEIR SOURCES.

JUST DO YOUR BEST.

I WILL. AND JIM... I HAVE A GOOD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

HELLO, MR. DOWNING. PLEASE SIT DOWN.

NOW TELL ME, WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I ASSUME YOU SAW MY PRESS CONFERENCE?

I DID.

GOOD. THEN THAT ALSO MEANS THAT YOU KNOW THAT I NEED MONEY TO RUN A FOUNDATION LIKE THAT.

AND YOU'D LIKE FOR ME OR MY CORPORATIONS TO HELP FUND YOU IN YOUR NEW ENDEAVOR. IS THAT CORRECT?

BINGO!

WELL, JIM, THOUGH I AM IMPRESSED WITH YOUR NEWFOUND CONFIDENCE, I'M SURE YOU REALIZE THAT THE FAVOR YOU'RE ABOUT TO ASK WILL COME AT AN UNBELIEVABLE COST. WHILE I'M NOT ADVERSE TO LETTING YOU HAVE A LITTLE PUBLIC SHOWING OF YOUR POWERS-- ACTING LIKE SOME LONG LOST MESSIAH FOR THE FOLKS-- I'M NOT SURE YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'LL NEED TO GIVE UP IN RETURN.

YOU DONE?

FOR NOW.

GOOD!

LET'S SEE IF I CAN MAKE THIS SIMPLE ENOUGH FOR YOU...

I'M NOT HERE TO NEGOTIATE! AND I'M NOT GIVING YOU A *DAMN* THING! QUITE THE CONTRARY. INSTEAD, YOU'RE GOING TO FULLY FUND THIS FOUNDATION AND IN RETURN OUR RELATIONSHIP REMAINS EXACTLY THE WAY IT IS RIGHT NOW. THAT'S IT. THAT'S THE DEAL!

YOU DON'T GET TO SAY ANYTHING OTHER THAN "YES, MR. DOWNING. ABSOLUTELY, MR. DOWNING." BECAUSE I ALREADY KNOW THAT YOU NEED ME. SO YOU WANT TO F*CK WITH ME-- OR MY COSTUME OR MY POWERS? *THEN GO AHEAD!* KNOCK YOURSELF OUT! BUT IT'S GOING TO COST YOU.

AND EVERY TIME I THINK YOU'VE SENT ONE OF YOUR GOONS TO TEST ME, IT'S GOING TO COST YOU MORE.

AND IF ANYONE -- NOT THAT I *GIVE A CRAP*-- FROM THE MEDIA ASKS WHY YOU'RE DOING THIS I'M SURE YOU'RE CLEVER ENOUGH TO TELL THEM SOMETHING THAT'LL MAKE YOU AND YOUR CORPORATIONS LOOK LIKE PHILANTHROPIC SAINTS.

SO I'M SUPPOSED TO...

SHUT UP!

I SAID YOU DON'T GET TO TALK! YOU NEED SPAWN FOR WHATEVER TWISTED REASONS YOU'VE DELUDED YOURSELF WITH, THAT'S FINE! BUT I'LL BE DAMNED IF YOU'RE GOING TO CALL ALL THE SHOTS! SO THE ONLY WAY YOU KEEP ME ON YOUR SIDE IS WITH YOUR CASH.

BUT I HAVE TO TELL YOU, ***BLUDD***, I THOUGHT YOU WERE BETTER THAN SOME TWO-BIT THUG SENDING HIT MEN TO DO HIS DIRTY WORK.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING? THREATENING ME? TRYING TO SCARE ME?

WELL, YOU DON'T.

THAT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW ME WELL ENOUGH YET. YOU WILL, IN TIME.

SO, I'LL PLAY THIS GAME ANY WAY YOU WANT. WE CAN JUST KEEP IT TO OURSELVES OR WE CAN DRAG ALL OUR SINS OUT INTO THE LIGHT FOR EVERYONE TO SEE.

AND I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU VAMPIRES LIKE BEING IN THE LIGHT.

BESIDES, I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY HEARD THAT I PAID A LITTLE VISIT TO ONE OF YOUR SMALL SHELL COMPANIES OVER IN JERSEY LAST NIGHT. THOUGHT I'D TEST MY WHOLE "THEY HATE LIGHT" THEORY.

Fifteen hours ago.

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DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM...

Now.

ONE OF THEM GOT OUT ALIVE.

I KNOW.

I NEEDED SOMEONE TO CRAWL BACK AND GIVE YOU THE NEWS.

AND SINCE IT WAS NEARLY DAWN WHEN I ATTACKED, I'M THINKING YOUR BOY WASN'T ABLE TO GET BACK HERE AS FAST AS HE WOULD HAVE AT NIGHT. WHICH MEANS YOU'RE PROBABLY SITTING THERE MAD AS HELL, BECAUSE YOU JUST FOUND OUT ABOUT IT. AND ***WORSE THAN THAT,*** I'M BETTING A FEW OF THOSE DOUCHEBAGS WERE RELATED TO YOU. RIGHT?

OH... C'MON, DON'T GO ALL SILENT ON ME-- AND LOSE THE FIVE MILE STARE. YOU'RE BECOMING A CLICHÉ.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I ALREADY TOLD YOU. I WANT YOUR CASH.

YOU COULD HAVE PHONED ME FOR THAT. WHY COME HERE PERSONALLY?

BECAUSE IT WAS MY TURN TO TEST YOU.

AND DID I PASS?

YES.

WHAT WAS THE TEST?

I WANTED TO SEE HOW MUCH SHIT YOU'D PUT UP WITH IF THERE WAS SOMETHING IN IT FOR YOU. IT APPEARS THE ANSWER IS-- ***A LOT!*** EVEN THOUGH I KILLED SOME OF YOUR PEOPLE AND INSULTED YOU IN THE PROCESS, YOU DIDN'T LOSE YOUR COMPOSURE. IN A BIZARRE WAY, I ADMIRE THAT.

BECAUSE WE BOTH KNOW WHAT'S COMING. WHAT WILL HAPPEN ONCE MALEBOLGIA IS WHOLE AGAIN. AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS I'M GOING TO NEED PROTECTION FOR A FEW PEOPLE I KNOW. YOU HAVE THE DISCIPLINE AND RESOURCES TO MAKE THAT HAPPEN.

AND IF YOU HELP ME--I HELP YOU.

THAT DAY IS DRAWING NEAR. WILL YOU BE READY?

YOU'LL BE A LINCHPIN IN THAT BATTLE, I BELIEVE

THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE KEEPS SAYING. SO, WHEN THE TIME COMES, IF YOU DO YOUR PART, I'LL DO MINE.

IN THE MEANTIME, I'D LIKE TO BRING SOME HOPE TO THE WORLD. YOU GET TO BE A PART OF THAT.

YOU'LL FIND ALL THE PAPERWORK YOU NEED IN THE BRIEFCASE. *OH*... BY THE WAY, THANKS FOR THE WEDDING PHOTO YOU LEFT INSIDE IT.* I'M ABOUT TO GET MY FIRST BIT OF REAL INFORMATION FROM MY PAST.

SEE YOU SOON--WHEN YOU *LEAST EXPECT* IT.

JIM DOWNING FOUNDATION

*Issue 202--Todd

I LOOK FORWARD TO IT MR. DOWNING.

OR SHOULD I SAY... PARTNER?

deeDEET
diDEET

HEY, JIM. HOW'D YOUR MEETING GO? WAS HE INTERESTED?

BETTER THAN THAT. HE AGREED TO GIVE US ENOUGH CASH FLOW FOR OUR FIRST YEAR.

NO WAY!!

JESUS, MAN, WHAT'D YOU TELL HIM? I MEAN--A FULL YEAR! THAT'S UNHEARD OF! NOBODY DOES THAT UNLESS THEY'RE BILL GATES.

BUT, LOOK, WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO BE ATTACHED TO YOU? WITH ALL THE EXPOSURE IN THE MEDIA YOU'VE BEEN GETTING, IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE...

Unh?

BREEP- BREEP- BREEP-

WHAT IS IT?

THERE'S A PHONE GOING OFF IN MY POCKET -- I DIDN'T PUT IT THERE.

CALLER UNKNOWN

212-555-5555

time: 5:41 p.m.

DECEMBER 12th

AND IT DOESN'T SAY WHO'S CALLING. HANG ON, I'M GOING TO ANSWER THIS. SEE WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON.

HELLO...?

MR. ROSEN-- LISTEN VERY CAREFULLY.

WHO IS THIS?

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

WE DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THAT. I'LL EXPLAIN LATER. WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW IS YOUR LIFE IS IN DANGER. YOUR CELL PHONE HAS BEEN TRACED AND YOU'VE ONLY GOT THREE MINUTES TO SAVE YOURSELF.

THE PEOPLE WHO MEAN YOU HARM WILL ENTER THE STATION YOU'RE AT IN LESS THAN TWO MINUTES. IF THEY FIND YOU, THAT'S IT-- GAME OVER! THOUGH THEY'LL MAKE SURE IT ISN'T DONE IN FRONT OF THE PUBLIC.

YOU NEED TO REMOVE THE BATTERY FROM YOUR CELL PHONE!

SERIOUSLY...?

JUST DO IT!! NOW!

OKAY, I DID IT. NOW WHAT?

DROP YOUR PHONE ON THE FLOOR AND CRUSH IT. THEY HAVE WAYS OF TRACKING WITHOUT A BATTERY SIGNAL. YOU'RE DOWN TO A MINUTE AND A HALF!

KRAKK

THEN PICK UP THE PIECES AND GO TO THE RESTROOM AT THE EAST END OF THE LOBBY. DUMP THE PARTS IN SEPARATE TRASHCANS.

YOU JUST BOUGHT YOURSELF SOME TIME. THAT'S GOOD.

WHO ARE YOU? AND WHAT'S ALL THIS BULLSHIT ABOUT?! I WAS SUPPOSED TO MEET A FRIEND OUT THERE.

YOUR FRIEND'S NOT COMING. THEY ALREADY GOT TO HIM. SO, DO YOURSELF A FAVOR AND LISTEN TO WHAT I'M ABOUT TO SAY.

I WORK FOR THE GOVERNMENT, VERY HIGH-LEVEL STUFF, AND THE OTHER DAY OUR COMPUTERS THREW UP A RED FLAG. YOU SEE, A FEW PEOPLE PUNCHED IN A SEARCH FOR SOMEONE THAT OUR SIDE WOULD RATHER NOT HAVE POPPING UP -- THE PROBLEM IS WITHIN OUR OWN RANK AND FILE THERE ARE FACTIONS, EACH WITH THEIR OWN AGENDA AND SEPARATE SECURITY CLEARANCES. WHICH MEANS THAT, FROM TIME TO TIME, MY WORST ENEMIES ARE INSIDE THE GROUP I WORK FOR.

THINK ABOUT IT LIKE TEN REPORTERS, LIKE YOURSELF, ALL FIGHTING FOR THE ONE HEADLINE THAT'LL MAKE THEIR CAREER. THEY'D ALL DO ANYTHING TO GET THERE FIRST. THAT'S HOW MY BUSINESS WORKS TOO. SO I NEEDED TO GET TO YOU AHEAD OF THEM.

THAT'S WHY I PLANTED THAT PHONE IN YOUR POCKET.

HOW'D YOU DO THAT?

WE'VE BEEN TRAINED.

NOW I NEED IT BACK.

AND YOU KNOW WHAT STARTED ALL THIS? YOU SENT A PICTURE TO PEOPLE. A PICTURE THAT SHOULDN'T EXIST.

SO YOU KNOW THE TRUTH ABOUT JIM DOWNING'S PAST?

I'M TALKING ABOUT THE WOMAN. SHE'S THE ONE THEY'RE CONCERNED WITH. THEY DON'T LIKE GHOSTS POPPING UP UNEXPECTEDLY.

AM I SUPPOSED TO JUST STAND HERE AND BELIEVE EVERY-THING YOU'RE SAYING? HOW DO I KNOW I CAN TRUST YOU ANY MORE THAN THEM?

YOU DON'T.

AND YOU'RE SAYING THEY MIGHT KILL ME BECAUSE OF ALL THIS?

I DIDN'T SAY "MIGHT."

NO!

THIS IS CRAZY! *ALL OF IT!* I... I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING. I'M JUST TRYING TO HELP OUT A FRIEND.

SO GO ***SCREW YOURSELF!*** I DON'T NEED ANY OF THIS! I'VE GOT MY OWN CONTACTS.

YOU DON'T GET TO WALK AWAY THAT EASY.

GET YOUR HAND OFF ME!

YOU SENT OUT THE PHOTO. YOU CAN'T TAKE THAT BACK. THEY WILL NOW HUNT YOU AND WATCH YOU UNTIL THEY THINK NO ONE'S LOOKING. LUCKY FOR YOU, YOU'VE BEEN GETTING LOTS OF MEDIA ATTENTION, SO THEY WILL BE MORE DISCRETE THAN THEIR NORM.

WHOA...

THIS IS MESSED UP, DUDE.

IT'S A LOT TO ABSORB, I KNOW.

LET ME SHOW YOU HOW TO GET OUT OF HERE. YOU GO HOME AND THINK ABOUT ALL THIS. BUT IF YOU SEE ANYTHING SUSPICIOUS AND THINK YOU MIGHT NEED HELP, THEN CALL ME.

AND WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T CALL THE POLICE...

TMP LIMITED HOLDINGS LLC

TERENCE FITZGERALD
DIRECTOR OF ACQUISITIONS AND LIQUIDATIONS
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THEY'RE IN ON IT, TOO.

Next: SECRETS UNVEILED

20
1992-2012
image

215

DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN®

THANKS FOR STAYING WITH US THROUGH THE BREAK--

--AND NOW, AS PROMISED, OUR MUCH ANTICIPATED GUEST, IN HIS FIRST APPEARANCE SINCE HE ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF HIS NEW FOUNDATION. ITS MISSION IS TO HELP PEOPLE WITH DISEASES CONSIDERED INCURABLE. MORE ON THAT LATER IN THE INTERVIEW.

FOR NOW, LET ME INTRODUCE JIM DOWNING. I'M SURE YOU'VE ALL BEEN READING ABOUT HIM IN THE PAST COUPLE OF WEEKS. WELCOME TO THE SHOW, JIM.

GLAD TO BE HERE.

RUNDOWN MOTEL. MIDDLE AMERICA.

OKAY, LET ME START BY ASKING, WHAT'S YOUR REACTION TO EVERYTHING THAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN YOUR LIFE RECENTLY? I MEAN, TV CAMERAS CAUGHT YOU LIVE AS YOU HEALED THAT PHOTOGRAPHER, AND NOW YOU'RE A HUGE INTERNATIONAL SENSATION. ALL THIS ATTENTION... HOW'RE YOU DEALING WITH IT?

IN ALL HONESTY, CRAIG, I DON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE IN THE MATTER. ONCE THAT VID OF ME GIVING HELP TO THAT INJURED MAN WENT VIRAL... WELL, IT'S GOTTEN SOMEWHAT HECTIC.

TO BE CLEAR, YOU DID MORE THAN JUST 'HELP' THAT MAN. WHAT WE SAW ON TV WAS CONFIRMED BY EYE WITNESSES. THAT MAN WAS CRITICALLY INJURED AFTER BEING HIT BY A CITY BUS. ALL REPORTS MENTIONED MASSIVE BLEEDING-- AND YOUR COMPANION, WHO HAPPENS TO BE A NURSE, WAS YELLING THAT HE WAS ABOUT TO DIE. THAT'S QUITE A SITUATION...

...AND DOCTORS CONTINUE TO BE MYSTIFIED BY THE POWERS YOU KEEP EXHIBITING. IN FACT, THE MYSTERIES SURROUNDING YOU CONTINUE TO GROW.

EVERY PERSON WHO'S MADE SOME KIND OF PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH YOU AND WHO WAS, AT THE TIME, STRICKEN WITH A DISEASE OR PHYSICAL ALIMENT, HAS BEEN CURED. DOCTORS HAVE CONFIRMED THEIR NEW FOUND HEALTH. SO, THESE EVENTS, WHICH BEGAN AS RUMORS, HAVE PROVEN TO BE TRUE.

ALL OF THIS BECOMES EVEN MORE COMPELLING DUE TO YOUR LACK OF ANY RECOLLECTION OF YOUR PAST-- AND THE FACT THAT, AS OF TODAY, NO ONE HAS STEPPED FORWARD CLAIMING TO HAVE KNOWN YOU. NO ONE AT ALL.

CAN YOU TALK ABOUT WHY YOU THINK THAT IS?

SO FAR, NONE OF MY DOCTORS OR ANY OF THE STAFF FROM THE HOSPITAL REMEMBERS HOW I GOT THERE...

AND YOU WERE THERE IN A COMA, FOR YEARS, UNTIL VERY RECENTLY.

THAT'S RIGHT. BUT MY FILES WERE EITHER LOST OR DESTROYED WHEN THE BUILDING I WAS IN CAUGHT FIRE.* IT'S FRUSTRATING. THE TRAIL TO MY PAST SEEMS TO JUST LEAD OFF A CLIFF, AND NO ONE HAS GIVEN ME A PROPER SENSE OF HOW THAT COULD'VE HAPPENED. HOPEFULLY, WE'LL GET SOME ANSWERS SOON.

*Issue 187 -- Todd

THAT HAS TO BE DIFFICULT, NOT HAVING EVEN A HINT OF YOUR PAST. I'VE READ WHERE YOU SAID THAT JIM DOWNING MIGHT NOT EVEN BE YOUR REAL NAME.

NO ONE KNOWS. IT WAS THE NAME ON MY BED AND ON THE DOOR TO MY HOSPITAL ROOM. THE AUTHORITIES CONDUCTED A NAME SEARCH BUT HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO FIND ANYTHING YET. I KEEP ASKING THE SAME QUESTIONS I'M SURE YOUR VIEWERS ARE ASKING: **"HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?"** SURELY, SOMEONE HAS INFORMATION-- AND WHAT ABOUT FAMILY OR FRIENDS? SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE, HAS TO RECOGNIZE ME.

VATICAN CITY.

I BELIEVE YOU'VE READ THE REPORT. IT CONTAINS WRITE-UPS ON NEARLY EVERYONE DOWNING HAS COME IN CONTACT WITH, BUT THESE THREE ARE THE ONLY ONES HE SEEMS TO HAVE ANY PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH. ONE WAS HIS BEDSIDE NURSE FOR YEARS. THE OTHER TWO ARE A COUPLE HE IS CURRENTLY LIVING WITH, THOUGH HE HASN'T BEEN BACK TO THEIR APARTMENT FOR A FEW DAYS.

THE MALE IS A REPORTER, AND NOW APPEARS TO BE WORKING FOR HIM IN SOME TYPE OF MANAGERIAL CAPACITY...

OUR STATION DID ITS OWN RESEARCH AFTER YOU AGREED TO THIS INTERVIEW. SADLY, WE RAN INTO THE SAME DEAD ENDS AS YOU AND THE POLICE. SO, WITH THE ASSUMPTION YOU APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE AND IMMEDIATELY STARTED PERFORMING MIRACLES, WHAT'S YOUR REACTION TO THE LARGE GROUP OF PEOPLE AROUND THE GLOBE WHO THINK YOU'RE THE SECOND COMING?...

...AND THE REASON NO ONE CAN FIND ANY BACK-GROUND ON YOU IS BECAUSE YOU MAY BE **JESUS CHRIST** HIMSELF...?

NO. THAT'S NOT ME.

...WHICH MAKES HIM A MORE DIFFICULT TARGET.

WE AGREE. AND MR. ROSEN'S GIRLFRIEND, SUSAN MATHEWS, SEEMS TO BE ONLY REMOTELY INVOLVED. SHE AND DOWNING... JUST THE TWO OF THEM... HAVE NEVER BEEN SEEN TOGETHER IN PUBLIC.

THEN THE NURSE IS OUR PLAY?

YES. WE'VE HAD SURVEILLANCE ON HER SINCE WE GOT OUR FIRST PHONE CALL ABOUT DOWNING. AND WHAT MAKES HER THE PERFECT ENTRY POINT IS HER COMPLETE DEVOTION TO THE CHURCH. IT COULDN'T HAVE TURNED OUT ANY BETTER.

THE POPE WILL BE PLEASED TO KNOW THAT THE PERSON CLOSEST TO MR. DOWNING IS ALSO LOYAL TO THE CATHOLIC TEACHINGS. HAVE WE MADE CONTACT?

NOT YET. SHE SEEMS TO HAVE SHELTERED HERSELF AWAY RECENTLY-- HASN'T BEEN OUT IN PUBLIC. BUT SHE'S TAKEN A NEW JOB IN UPSTATE NEW YORK. WE PLAN ON HAVING A CONVERSATION WITH HER THERE.

AS YOU'RE AWARE, THE VATICAN IS TAKING ALL OF THIS VERY SERIOUSLY, SO LET'S MAKE SURE WE TREAT THIS YOUNG LADY-- SARA JOHNSTON-- AS GENTLY AS POSSIBLE. IT APPEARS SHE HAS SOME EMOTIONAL ISSUES, TOO, SO LET'S NOT TEMPT THE FATES.

I'M FAR FROM BEING ANY KIND OF SAINT. BUT I UNDERSTAND HOW PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO MAKE SENSE OF WHAT I'VE DONE. I'M TRYING TO DO THE SAME THING. I DON'T KNOW WHERE THE POWER COMES FROM, HOW LONG I'VE HAD IT OR HOW IT EVEN WORKS. THE FIRST FEW FOLKS I HELPED, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I'D DONE IT. IT WAS ALL ACCIDENTAL.

REMEMBER, I WAS JUST COMING OUT OF MY COMA. SO, YES, I SEEM TO HAVE THIS GIFT-- BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME WORTHY OF THOSE KINDS OF TITLES.

THEN WHAT WOULD YOU CALL YOURSELF?

STATE HOSPITAL. ALBANY, NEW YORK

A GOOD SAMARITAN. THAT'S ALL. IF ANYONE ELSE HAD THIS POWER, THEY'D USE IT TO HELP, TOO. I FIND IT FAR MORE IMPRESSIVE THAT EVERY DAY MILLIONS OF PEOPLE WORK IN THEIR CHOSEN CAREERS HELPING OTHERS LESS FORTUNATE THAN THEMSELVES.

WHEN I WAS IN MY COMA, I WAS SURROUNDED BY PEOPLE LIKE THAT.

YOU'RE RIGHT-- THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO PUT THEMSELVES IN HARM'S WAY TO PROTECT THIS NATION, AND THE DOCTORS, NURSES, POLICE AND FIRE-FIGHTERS -- ALL DESERVE OUR GRATITUDE.

BUT THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT **YOU'RE SPECIAL**. AND UNTIL YOUR ACTIONS SAY OTHERWISE--I THINK THE WORLD IS GOING TO LOOK AT YOU IN AMAZEMENT. YOU'RE EVEN SETTING SOME FASHION TRENDS.

SUNGLASSES-AT-NIGHT HAS GRIPPED THE NATION.

FASCINATING, ISN'T HE?

THE GOOD BOOK SAYS "THERE WILL BE NO MORE DEATH OR MOURNING OR CRYING OR PAIN, FOR THE OLD ORDER OF THINGS HAS PASSED AWAY."

EXCUSE ME?

FORGIVE ME, MS. JOHNSTON, I APOLOGIZE IF I'M INTERRUPTING YOU, BUT I WAS WONDERING IF...

YOU A REPORTER?

OH MY GOODNESS... NO.

THEN WHAT *DO YOU WANT?*

MY NAME IS FATHER HALLWELL, AND I'VE TRAVELED A LONG WAY TO DELIVER AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM MY SUPERIOR.

AND WHO MIGHT *THAT* BE?

AS AN ENVOY FOR THE OFFICE OF THE PAPACY I COME WITH DIRECT ORDERS FROM HIS HOLINESS HIMSELF.

THE POPE? YOU WORK FOR THE ACTUAL POPE?

WOW! YOU GUYS WILL STOOP TO ANYTHING TO GET YOUR STORY... WON'T YOU?

AND THE REASON I WEAR THOSE GLASSES IS TO TRY AND BE SOMEWHAT INCONSPICUOUS OUT IN PUBLIC. THAT OTHERS ARE BEGINNING TO DRESS THE SAME WAY, WITH THE SHADES AND HAT, ACTUALLY MAKES IT EASIER FOR ME TO MOVE AROUND.

THE MORE GUYS THAT LOOK LIKE ME THE LESS CHANCE I HAVE OF A BYSTANDER THINKING IT **REALLY** IS ME.

THAT'S AN INTERESTING TAKE ON YOUR CELEBRITY.

NOW IF YOU DON'T MIND, I NEED TO GET BACK TO WORK.

MA'AM. I ASSURE YOU-- I'M NOT THE PAPARAZZI. I ONLY CAME TO ASK FOR YOUR HELP.

CLEARLY, THOUGH, WE-- I-- HAVE MADE A MISTAKE. AGAIN, I'M SORRY FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE. WE THOUGHT-- PERHAPS BECAUSE OF YOUR STRONG FAITH AND LOVE FOR THE LORD-- YOU COULD BE OF VALUE.

THIS ASSIGNMENT WAS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO HIS HOLINESS, BUT HE INSISTED WE ONLY GET YOUR PARTICIPATION WILLINGLY. HE DIDN'T WANT TO IMPOSE HIMSELF OTHERWISE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

WAIT...

DID THE POPE REALLY SEND YOU?

HE DID.

OH!... SO THIS IS ABOUT JIM AGAIN. I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED!

WHY?

BECAUSE OF YOUR CONNECTION TO MR. DOWNING.

NO. IT'S ABOUT THE *BOTH* OF YOU. AS FAR AS WE CAN TELL, MR. DOWNING HAS NOT ANNOUNCED HIS ALLEGIANCE TO ANY DENOMINATION. AS ONE OF GOD'S FINEST, WE HAD HOPED YOU MIGHT HELP US ARRANGE A MEETING BY GETTING MR. DOWNING AND YOURSELF TO THE VATICAN.

YOU *WANT ME* TO GO TO THE *VATICAN?!*

AS INVITED GUESTS-- AT NO EXPENSE TO YOU, OF COURSE.

AND MORE RECENTLY, YOU ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF YOUR NEW FOUNDATION. TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH WITH IT?

TO HELP OTHERS WHO ARE IN NEED OF HOPE. ESPECIALLY WHEN MODERN MEDICINE HAS FAILED THEM.

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'VE EVER HAD ANYONE IN YOUR FAMILY GET HORRIBLY SICK...?

BUT IF ONE OF YOUR KIDS HAD A BRAIN TUMOR AND THE DOCTORS SAID IT WAS INOPERABLE. WOULD YOU SIT IDLY BY WAITING FOR YOUR TEN YEAR OLD TO DIE-- **OR WOULD YOU DO SOMETHING?**-- ANY-THING!-- IF GIVEN THE CHANCE?

THE AUTOPSY GUYS STILL HAVEN'T CONFIRMED THE BLOOD SAMPLE FROM THE VICTIMS, BUT... HELLO...? ARE YOU LISTENING?

NOT REALLY. I WANT TO LISTEN TO THE REST OF THIS INTERVIEW.

WHY THE SUDDEN INTEREST? ESPECIALLY WHEN WORK'S PILING UP FROM YOUR OTHER CASES?

BECAUSE HE'S A PART OF THIS.

HOW?

STILL TRYING TO PIECE IT TOGETHER.

HAVE YOU SLIPPED A GEAR? WHAT THE HELL HAS HE GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING WE NEED? AND I STILL DON'T GET HOW YOU MET HIM IN THE FIRST PLACE.

LOOK, I DON'T MEAN TO BE RUDE, BUT WE'VE GOT BIGGER FISH TO FRY THAN *SOME* ***FREAK*** LOOKING FOR HIS FIFTEEN MINUTES OF FAME.

THAT DOESN'T PRECLUDE US FROM ACKNOWLEDGING HIS POWERS. NOR THE POTENTIAL VALUE THEY HOLD.

DETECTIVE ROWAND... HAVE I MENTIONED HOW MUCH YOU'RE BEGINNING TO SOUND *JUST* ***LIKE*** SAM?

WELL, OF COURSE WE'D ALL DO WHATEVER WAS WITHIN OUR POWERS TO SAVE OUR LOVED ONES.

THAT'S MY POINT. YOU'D DO **ANYTHING!** EVEN IF IT WAS COMPLETELY UNCONVENTIONAL. MY DOCTOR AT ST. ANTHONY'S -- WHO'S CURRENTLY MISSING, ALONG WITH ANOTHER DOCTOR FRIEND OF HIS -- SAID NOT TO TRY TO MAKE SENSE OF WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ME. JUST REJOICE IN IT.

I'M TRYING TO TAKE THAT ADVICE TO HEART.

JESUS CHRIST! HOW'S A *GODDAMN* INTERVIEW HELPING OUR CASE? THINK ABOUT IT! HE'S NOT GOING TO SAY ANYTHING NEW ON TV.

MAYBE-- BUT WE ALREADY AGREE HE'S SOMEHOW TIED TO YOUR MURDER CASE.* AND THOSE MISSING DOCTORS WERE ON YOUR VICTIM'S CALL LIST.

um... EXCUSE ME, DETECTIVE...

*issue 185-- Todd

YOUR REPORT FROM THE PRINTS LAB JUST ARRIVED. THEY SAID TO GET IT TO YOU IMMEDIATELY BECAUSE THEY FOUND SOME ANOMALIES WITH YOUR "FAITH HEALER."

BY THE WAY, HOW'S DETECTIVE BURKE DOING?

THE SAME. THANKS FOR ASKING.

WHAT'S THE LAB TALKING ABOUT... ANOMALIES?

SPEAKING OF WHICH, YOU MENTIONED THE DISAPPEARANCE OF TWO DOCTORS WHO TENDED TO YOU DURING YOUR COMA. ANY WORD ON THEIR WHEREABOUTS?

NOT YET. THE POLICE SAID THEY'RE STILL INVESTIGATING.

AND BECAUSE THEY MAY HOLD SOME CLUES TO YOUR PAST, THIS HAS TO BE ANOTHER FRUSTRATING DEVELOPMENT IN THE SEARCH FOR YOUR IDENTITY.

IT IS, BUT MY MAIN CONCERN IS FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THOSE DOCTORS. THEY WERE ON A HUNTING TRIP IN MINNESOTA WHEN THEY DISAPPEARED-- THE SEARCH PARTIES ARE STILL HOPEFUL.

SPIT IT OUT! WHAT'S IT SAY?

HERE. READ IT YOURSELF.

NO WAY.

WE'LL BE KEEPING AN EYE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THAT RESCUE MISSION. LET'S CHANGE SUBJECTS FOR A MOMENT AND TALK ABOUT YOUR POWERS.

DO YOU KNOW IF THE 'HEALING' YOU DO ON OTHERS IS PERMANENT?

SO FAR, THAT APPEARS TO BE THE CASE. NONE OF THOSE I'VE TOUCHED HAS DISPLAYED ANY REGRESSION SO FAR. THE DOCTORS ARE STILL MONITORING THOSE PATIENTS.

IS THIS SOME KIND OF *JOKE?!*

NO.

A TECHNICIAN ALREADY LEFT A MESSAGE SAYING I WASN'T GOING TO LIKE WHAT I READ-- AND STRESSED THEY'D RUN THE PRINTS FOUR SEPARATE TIMES.

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY WANT US TO BELIEVE...?

WE DON'T HAVE AN OPTION.

Horn, Jim L.
DOB: 10/4/1981

Barreck, Timothy M.
DOB: 8/28/1974

Arias, Andrew
DOB: 2/17/1977

SO THIS IS OKAY WITH YOU?...

...THAT DOWNING HAS TEN DIFFERENT PRINTS, MATCHING TEN DIFFERENT CRIMINALS.

NOT CRIMINALS. MURDERERS.

AND EACH ONE DIED WHILE IMPRISONED... AT TEN DIFFERENT PENITENTIARIES.

I'VE READ WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO SUBJECT YOURSELF TO EXTENSIVE TESTING BEFORE OFFICIALLY OPENING THE DOORS TO YOUR NEW FOUNDATION. WHAT ARE YOU CALLING IT?

THE JOHN DOE OUTREACH FOUNDA-TION.

WHY JOHN DOE?

IT'S FOR ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO FEEL LEFT ALONE BY THE WORLD. WHEN THEIR SITUATION HAS GOTTEN TO WHERE THEY FEEL LIKE NO ONE IS WILLING TO RECOGNIZE THEM OR THEIR PERSONAL PAIN.

AND YOU CAN RELATE TO THEM?

I'M HOPING I CAN SHARE MY EXPERIENCE WITH THEM, IF THEY WANT IT.

C.I.A. SUBSTATION. NEW YORK CITY.

I DON'T LIKE HOW 'PUBLIC' DOWNING'S BECOME.

YOU AND ME. *FRIGGIN' YOUTUBE* -- MAKES DOING OUR JOB SO GODDAMN DIFFICULT. I HATE THAT EVERY-ONE HAS A CAMERA PHONE IN THEIR HANDS THESE DAYS.

THIS ONE MIGHT TAKE AWHILE.

SO, THIS MARC ROSEN CHARACTER -- DID HE TAKE THE BAIT?

NOT YET.

BUT WHEN HE FINDS OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS FELLOW REPORTERS, THEIR DEATHS SHOULD SCARE HIM RIGHT INTO OUR TRAP.

DID YOU GIVE HIM YOUR CARD?

YES. I'M TRYING TO KEEP THIS SIMPLE. HE'LL COME AROUND SOON ENOUGH.

SINCE WE'RE ON THE TOPIC OF SHARING, I'M SURE MY AUDIENCE WOULD LOVE TO SEE IF YOU'D SHARE A LITTLE OF YOUR MAGIC HERE TODAY. TO START... I'VE GOT THIS ARTHRITIC SHOULDER THAT BUGS ME EVERY...

DON'T MOVE!

YOU'RE ABOUT TO EXPERIENCE THE **SHOCK OF YOUR LIFE**... IF YOUR HEART CAN TAKE IT!

IT HURTS **THAT** BAD?

JUST PULLING YOUR LEG! I'M NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING TO YOU. SINCE I DON'T KNOW HOW MY POWERS WORK OR HOW MUCH I HAVE LEFT, I'M NOT WILLING TO WASTE THEM ON A SHOULDER. I MEAN, WHAT IF IT'S THE LAST JOLT I HAVE LEFT-- DON'T YOU THINK I SHOULD SAVE IT FOR SOMEONE IN MUCH MORE NEED THAN YOU?

CAN'T ARGUE THERE.

PLUS MY MANAGER-- WHO YOU MET BACK-STAGE-- HE'D GIVE ME HECK FOR NOT TAKING ALL OF THIS SERIOUSLY.

GREEN ROOM. MORNING SHOW. NEW YORK CITY.

WELL, I'VE READ YOUR FOUNDATION'S MISSION STATEMENT AND IT ALL SOUNDS QUITE SERIOUS. I DIDN'T MEAN TO USE MY SITUATION TO TRIVIALIZE THOSE WHO REALLY NEED YOUR HELP.

THAT'S OKAY, BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO PEOPLE TO BELIEVE THAT WE'RE TAKING THEIR ISSUES SERIOUSLY.

THAT **TRUST** WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT, WON'T IT?

TMP LIMIT

RENCE FITZGERALD
RECTOR OF ACQUISITIONS
AND LIQUIDATIONS

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I WAS CURIOUS-- BESIDES THE RELATIONSHIPS YOU'LL BE HAVING THROUGH YOUR FOUNDATION, WHAT ABOUT THOSE IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE? FOR INSTANCE, YOU DON'T KNOW WHETHER-- IN YOUR PAST LIFE-- YOU WERE MARRIED OR HAD A GIRLFRIEND. SO WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU START A RELATIONSHIP NOW AND FIND OUT LATER ON THAT YOU HAVE A WIFE, OR AN EX-WIFE AND FIVE CHILDREN?

HOW DO YOU MOVE ON TODAY WITHOUT THOSE KINDS OF ANSWERS?

TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST I STRUGGLE WITH THAT EVERY DAY.

DO I MOVE ON? OR SHOULD I WAIT UNTIL I HAVE ALL MY ANSWERS?

BROOKLYN.

BEN'S

BEN'S DINER

SUSAN! FOR *THE HUNDREDTH TIME!* STOP WATCHING TV AND TAKE THE CUSTOMERS' ORDERS! THIS IS THE *LAST TIME* I'M GOING TO ASK YOU!!

PASTA

Traditional Pizz

Pizza w/cheese
Sicilian Pizza
Famous Grandma Pizza
Tomato & Garlic Pizza
Chicken & Ricotta
Chicken, Tomato & Basil
Chicken & Broccoli
Vegetable Pizza
Cavallo's Special Pizza
Eggplant Pizza
White Pizza w/ricotta, mozzarella
Salad Pizza no cholesterol
Lasagna Pizza
Barbeque Chicken Pizza

SORRY. I'M SORRY, BEN. JUST GOT A LITTLE DISTRACTED.

Vegetable Pizza 3.25 16.50 16.50
Cavallo's Special Pizza 3.25 16.50 19.50
Eggplant Pizza 3.25 16.00 18.00
White Pizza w/ricotta, mozzarella 3.25 18.00 21.00
Salad Pizza no cholesterol 2.75
Lasagna Pizza 3.25
Barbeque Chicken Pizza 3.25
Napoletana Pizza 3
Sorrento Pizza 3.25
Mediterranean Pizza 3
Romana Pizza 3.25
Pescatore Pi 3.50
Campangi
Fiesta Pizza 3.25
CREATE YO OWN PERSONAL INDIVIDUAL PIZZETTA 3.00
PAN PIZZA 6.75 Maximum 3 Toppings
Chicago Style Slice Pie
Chicken Broccoli

HELLO. CAN I GET YOU A DRINK, OR ARE YOU READY TO ORDER?

I DIDN'T MEAN TO PRY THAT DEEP.

THAT'S FINE. YOU'RE JUST DOING YOUR JOB.

BUT THAT QUESTION IS WHAT HELPED SPUR ME TO OPEN MY FOUNDATION. I WANTED TO MEET PEOPLE AND ENJOY THEIR LIVES WHILE I DISTRACTED MYSELF FROM THINKING ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT.

CHANGING SUBJECTS. WHAT'S ALL THIS ON THE BLOGOSPHERE ABOUT YOU BEING A SEX SYMBOL?

HERE WE GO AGAIN...

WHAT? YOU'RE BLUSHING, AREN'T YOU?

Traditiona
Pizza w/cheese
Sicilian Pizza
Famous Grandma Pizza
Tomato & Garlic Pizza
Chicken & Ricotta
Chicken, Tomato & Ba
Chicken, Broccoli
Vegetab Pizza
Ca ecial Pizz
E
Wh
Salad
Lasagna Pizza
cese, ground beef,

THAT MUST BE A TERRIBLE LIFE.

PARDON?

THAT YOUNG MAN ON TV. IT HAS TO BE A VERY LONELY LIFE. NOT KNOWING IF YOU CAN LOVE SOMEONE BECAUSE YOU MIGHT ALREADY HAVE ANOTHER PERSON IN YOUR LIFE.

Pizza w/cheese
Sicilian Pizza
Famous Grandma
mato & Garlic P
ch & Ricotta
en, Tomato &
en & Broccol
able Pizza
lio's Special Pi
Eggplant Pizza
White Pizza w/ricotta,

AND WHAT IF THAT OTHER PERSON FOUND OUT YOU WERE IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE NEW? THAT YOU WERE LIVING A DOUBLE LIFE?

UMM... HOW DO I ANSWER A QUESTION LIKE THAT? WHATEVER I SAY I'M DOOMED. IF I DENY IT-- THEN I'M BEING TOO MODEST OR COY. IF I ACCEPT IT-- THEN I'M AN EGOMANIAC.

I'LL MAKE IT EASY ON YOU, JIM-- BECAUSE I DON'T THINK YOU'RE SEXY AT ALL. SO WE CAN PUT THAT TO REST FOREVER.

THANKS. APPRECIATE THAT.

BUT THEN AGAIN, WHAT KIND OF EXISTENCE IS IT TO KNOW THAT THE PERSON YOU SO ***DESPERATELY DESIRE***-- THE ONE YOU KNOW WILL MAKE EVERYTHING RIGHT IN YOUR LIFE-- IS SOMEONE YOU CAN'T HAVE...?

SOMETHING LIKE THAT CAN TORTURE YOU TO THE DEPTHS OF YOUR SOUL-- MAKE YOU WONDER WHETHER YOU'LL ***EVER*** FIND THAT KIND OF HAPPINESS AGAIN. AND WORSE THAN THAT-- YOU'D HAVE TO GO BACK TO YOUR OLD LOVER AND LIVE A LIE FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.

I WOULDN'T WISH THAT UPON ANYONE.

RELIGION? YOU HAVEN'T BEEN VERY VOCAL ON THAT SUBJECT. IS THAT INTENTIONAL?

TO SOME DEGREE. I DIDN'T THINK I SHOULD ADVOCATE FOR ANY SPECIFIC CHURCH OR RELIGION UNTIL MY PAST WAS KNOWN.

A COUPLE OF CONSERVATIVE GROUPS THINK I'M DESECRATING THE TERM 'THE SECOND COMING'-- BUT THAT'S A TITLE THE MEDIA STARTED USING, NOT ME.

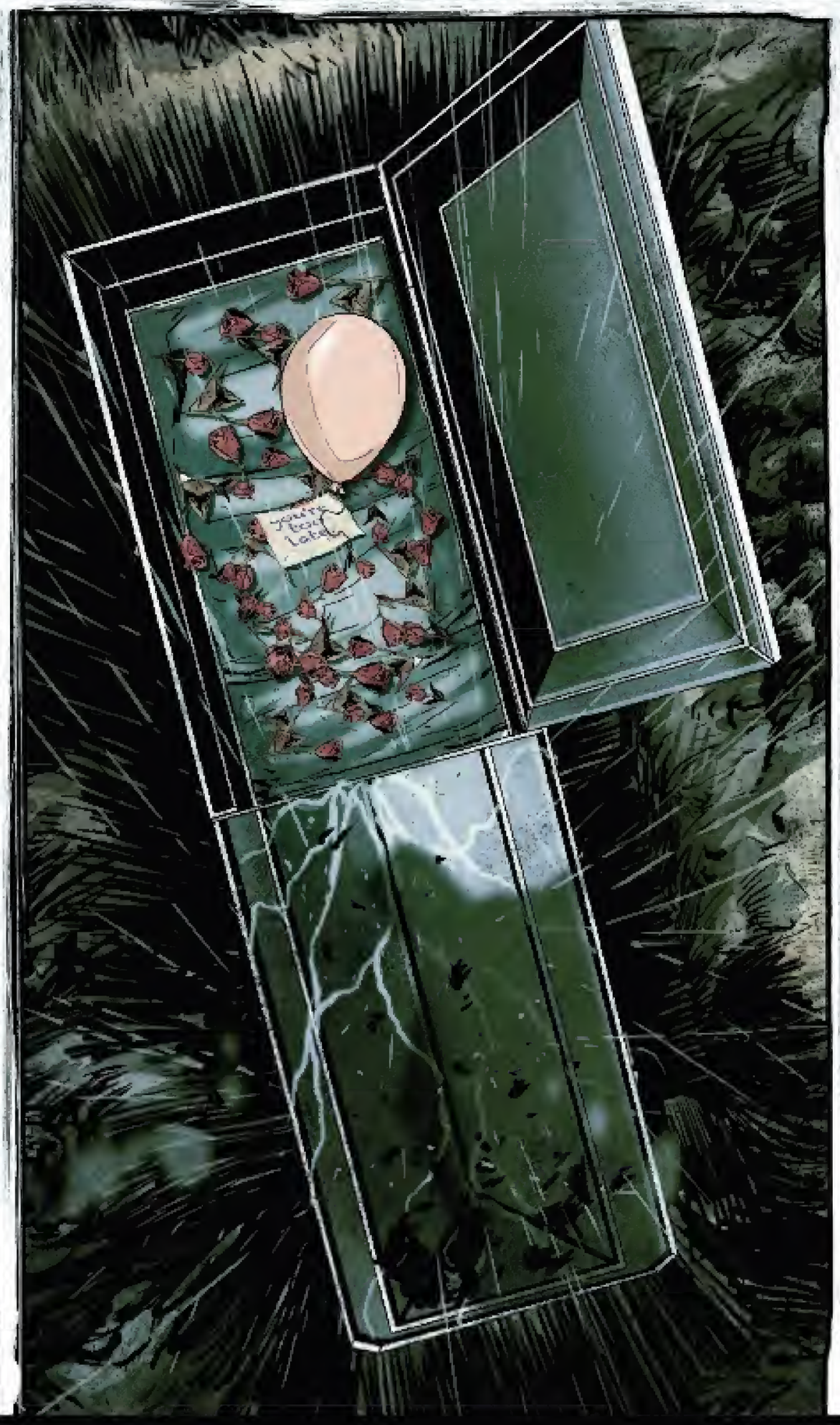
HEMPSTEAD, ARKANSAS.

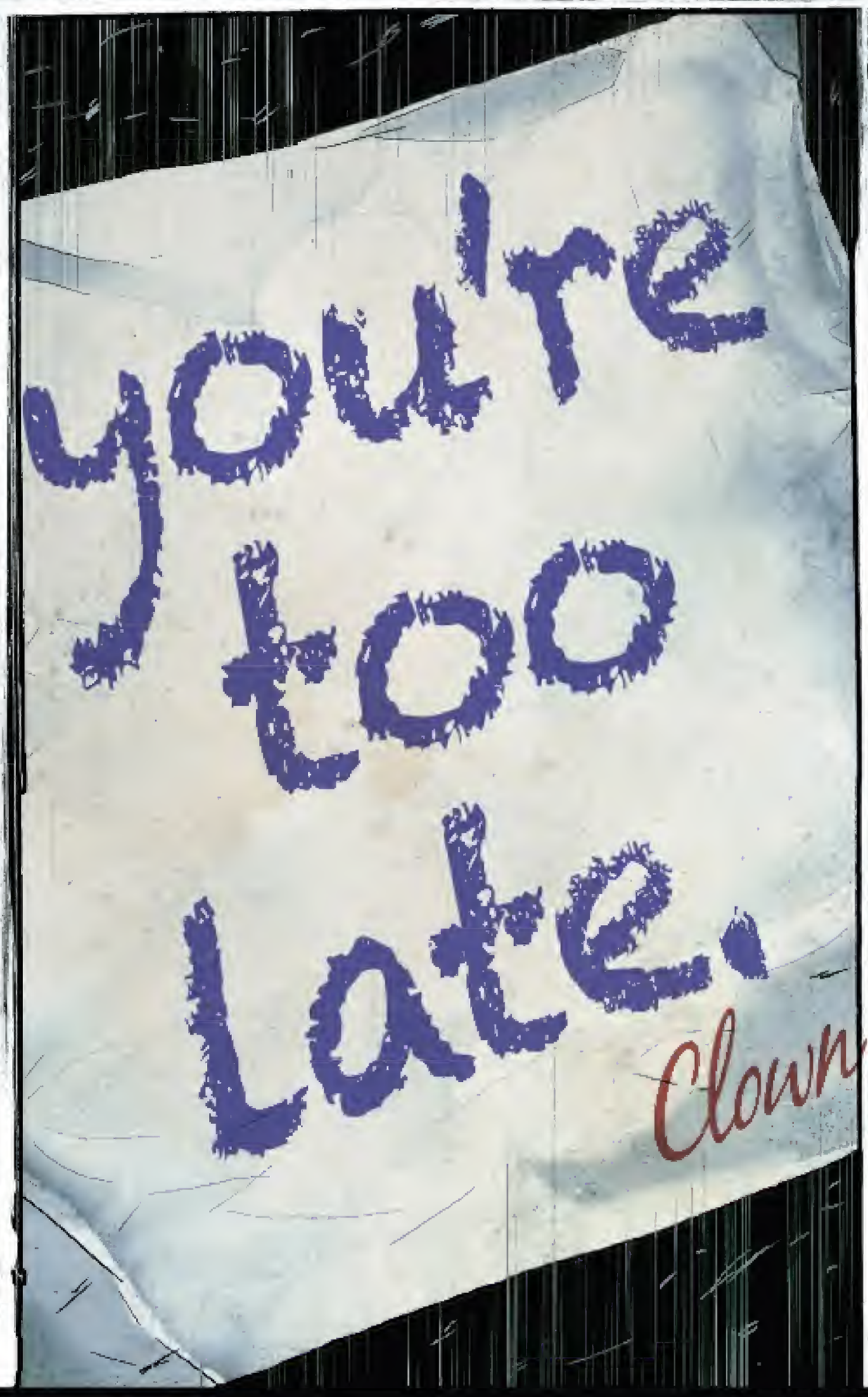
IT'S TIME, FALLEN SOLDIER-- TO TAKE BACK WHAT'S MINE.

BUT AREN'T YOU IN ESSENCE-- PLAYING GOD?

THERE'S A CONSERVATIVE WAVE OUT THERE THAT THINKS YOU'RE TEMPTING THE HEAVENS.

GRANT!-- OH MY GOD!! GET DOWN! HE'S...





...GOT A GUN!!

RAMUS INDUSTRIALS BUILDING.

YOUR NEW SUITS WILL BE READY BY THURSDAY. I'LL HAVE THEM DELIVERED IN THE MORNING.

THANK YOU, VICTOR.

MY PLEASURE, MR. RAMUS. I'LL BE COMING TOO -- IN CASE THERE ARE ANY LAST MINUTE ALTERATIONS.

2ND

BLAM

BLAM BLAM

...zzzzzzzrttttt

DID YOU SEE THAT?!

SOMEONE *SHOT HIM!!* MR. DOWNING'S BEEN *SHOT!*

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PICTURE?!

Oh my God!

GENTLEMEN-- ***PLEASE.*** I NEED YOU TO CALM DOWN. EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE... AND WHAT YOU JUST SAW WILL BE ***GREAT*** FOR BUSINESS.

THE FUTURE IS LOOKING BRIGHT.

next: ORIGINAL SINS

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SPAWN®

WHAT'S HIS CURRENT CONDITION?

ALL HIS MAJOR ORGANS STILL SEEM TO BE FUNCTIONING, BUT THE PATIENT'S VITALS ARE SHOWING SIGNS OF EXTREME DISTRESS!

STRAP HIM DOWN! IF WE HOPE FOR ANY SUCCESS, WE'LL NEED HIM STABILIZED FOR THE PROCEDURE. HE CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE ANY MORE BLOOD.

UP THE DOSAGE ON THE ANESTHETIC! WE NEED HIS READINGS AT MANAGEABLE LEVELS. FINISH THE PREP NOW-- WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME!

VITALS ARE STABILIZING. BP IS 126-OVER-81. HEART RATE IS ***SLIPPING!*** WE'RE NOW AT 70 BEATS PER MINUTE. WE'LL TRY HOLDING THERE-- ADMINISTERING THE I.V.-- SOMEONE WATCH FOR A REACTION TO THE FLUIDS. HE CAN'T DROP SIGNIFICANTLY FROM HERE ON OUT.

WE'RE CLEAR TO PROCEED. TURN ON THE RECORDER. DOCTOR DeLOREAN IS SET TO MAKE--

--THE FIRST INCISION.

MAKING VERTICAL INCISION INTO CHEST CAVITY. NO RESPONSE FROM PATIENT. ANESTHETIC HOLDING. PROCEDURE UNDERWAY AS OF --TIME?

0807 HOURS, MOUNTAIN STANDARD TIME.

FIRST INCISION COMPLETE.

PREPARING FOR SECONDARY INCISION BENEATH SKIN, THROUGH MUSCLE TISSUE, IN PREPARATION FOR THE NEXT STAGE. ALL TRANS-FUSIONS ALSO COMPLETE.

BEGIN... WHOA! WE HAVE A ***PROBLEM*** HERE, FOLKS! THE PATIENT'S EYES APPEAR TO BE-- ***CHRIST!!*** HE'S WAKING UP!

A CLASSIFIED GOVERNMENT FACILITY. MANY YEARS AGO.

SOMEONE-- RESTRAIN HIM!!

GET SECURITY UP HERE... NOW!

HE CONTINUES TO REJECT ALL ANESTHETIC. THIS IS THE THIRD SURGERY WE'VE ATTEMPTED THIS MONTH.

HIS PREVIOUS OPERATIONS WERE SUCCESSFUL AND WITHOUT INCIDENT, BUT WE CAN'T MOVE FORWARD UNTIL WE SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENT THE COMPLETE SPECTRUM OF OUR NEW PROCESS.

OUR PROBLEM IS THAT THIS PATIENT HAS BEGUN EXHIBITING SIGNS OF LOST COGNIZANCE. AND AS HE LOSES HIS EMOTIONAL GRIP ON REALITY...

...WE BELIEVE IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF WEEKS-- MAYBE DAYS-- BEFORE HE'S COMPLETELY INSANE.

WHICH WILL RENDER ANY OF HIS *POSITIVE* PHYSICAL RESULTS USELESS.

STILL, IF THEY CAN RESTORE HIS MENTAL CAPACITY TO ITS NORMAL STATE, WE'LL HAVE MADE SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS IN BOTH MOLECULAR AND TEMPORAL RESTORATION.

YOUR GOAL OF DESIGNING *AND* REPLICATING THE 'PERFECT HUMAN' WILL FINALLY BE WITHIN YOUR GRASP.

THEN YOU CAN BEGIN BUILDING US AN ARMY OF THEM!...

...SO LONG AS WE MAINTAIN "THE PROJECT'S" COMPLETE SECRECY. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, DIRECTOR?

MY PEOPLE ARE LOYAL. THEY UNDERSTAND THE CONSEQUENCES OF ANYTHING LEAKING OUT. SO IT'S NOT MY END YOU NEED TO BE WORRIED ABOUT.

BUT I UNDERSTAND YOUR FRUSTRATION. FOR WHATEVER REASON, THIS PATIENT OBVIOUSLY DOESN'T POSSESS THE QUALITIES WE NEED.

THE DOCTORS ASSURED ME HE WAS THE BEST CANDIDATE FROM THE GROUP THEY CHOSE FROM, THOUGH. AND I READ THE CHARTS ON HIS D.N.A. SAMPLING ALONG WITH HIS MENTAL PROFILE. BOTH INDICATED THAT MR. KULBICZI HAD THE X-FACTOR WE WERE LOOKING FOR.

WE'LL NEED TO FIND ANOTHER SUBJECT.

YOU DO KNOW THAT CAN TAKE SOME TIME. HOPEFULLY, YOU CAN EXTEND THE PROJECT DELIVERY TIME WITH YOUR PENTAGON FRIENDS. I'LL MAKE SURE MY STAFF UNDERSTANDS THE SEVERITY OF THIS FAILURE.

I'LL GET YOU YOUR TIME.

BUT YOU GET ME A PATIENT I CAN COUNT ON.

SO... YOU WANT TO MAKE HIM MY PROBLEM NOW?

WHAT'S THE MATTER? CAN'T CONTROL THE HIRED HELP?

I'VE BEEN HEARING RUMORS YOUR OPERATION ISN'T... UM, 'ACCELERATING'... AT THE RATE YOU'D EXPECTED. THAT'S SURPRISING, GIVEN THE SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE WE'VE DEVOTED TO YOUR LABS THESE PAST FEW YEARS.

MOST OF WHAT YOU'VE DONE IS GREATLY APPRECIATED-- BUT NONE OF THE PAPERS, PATENTS OR SCIENTISTS YOU'VE PROVIDED HAVE DONE ANY BETTER JOB AT SOLVING OUR PROBLEM THAN WHAT WAS ALREADY IN PROCESS.

THAT'S NOT TRUE. YOU MADE GREAT STRIDES WITH PATIENT 22.

UNTIL HE DIED.

BUT HE TOOK YOU TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

IT DOESN'T MATTER. HE WAS STILL A FAILURE. AND THE LAST FIVE PATIENTS PROVED THAT TO BE TRUE. SO WE'RE WILLING TO TRY SOME-THING NEW.

YOU'VE BEEN BRAGGING ABOUT YOUR GERMAN DOCTORS AND THEIR DNA SPLICING FOR QUITE A WHILE. IT'S TIME TO PUT THEM TO THE TEST.

I DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY OF RELOCATING THEM HERE AND GETTING THEM RAMPED UP TO OUR SPECS. WHICH MEANS YOU'LL TAKE OUR 'VOLUNTEER' HERE TO GERMANY, AND PREP HIM SO MY DOCTORS CAN COMPLETE THE NEXT OPERATION.

please...

DON'T DO THIS.

SHUT UP, RICHARD!

YOU DON'T HAVE A SAY IN *ANY* OF THIS. YOU SEALED YOUR FATE WITH YOUR BETRAYAL.

AND WHAT DO I GET OUT OF THIS?

SO WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE, *NORTEGO?* YOU WANT IN OR NOT?

WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS *WANTED*... YOUR HOOKS IN MY OPERATIONS. YOU PROVE YOU CAN DELIVER THE NECESSARY PRE-OP FUNCTION TO THE EXPERIMENTS, I'LL GIVE YOU THAT THIRTY PERCENT YOU ASKED FOR.

JUST LIKE THAT?

THIS IS IMPORTANT TO US.

SO IT SEEMS.

FINE. I'LL TAKE HIM. SEND HIS DOSSIER TO MY PRIVATE SERVER. WE'LL TAKE IT FROM THERE.

YOU'VE MADE THE RIGHT DECISION. THIS PARTNERSHIP IS EXACTLY WHAT WE BOTH NEED TO FLOURISH.

WE RECEIVED THE REPORT LATE LAST NIGHT...

I THOUGHT YOU SHOULD SEE THIS FIRST.

AS YOU KNOW, WE'VE BEEN MONITORING NORTEGO'S GERMAN LABS FROM A DISTANCE, SINCE WE ALSO HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN THEIR RESEARCH. OUR 'PLANT' TRANSMITTED THE LATEST RESULTS FROM THEIR EXPERIMENTS ON PATIENT 29... THE CIVILIAN YOU KNEW AS RICHARD MASULLO.

WERE NORTEGO'S PEOPLE TRYING TO SUPPRESS THE NEWS OF THIS OUTCOME?

WE DON'T KNOW. WE'RE STILL TRYING TO DETERMINE THAT.

BUT THE BIGGER ISSUE IS THE POTENTIAL IMPACT THIS HAS FOR BOTH OF US.

WE BOTH NEEDED THIS NEW D.N.A. SEQUENCE TO BE STABLE...

...AT LEAST LONG ENOUGH FOR US TO INFUSE IT WITH THOSE WE BUILT HERE.

BUT NOT ONLY WON'T THEY BE COMPATIBLE-- THERE ARE ***SEVERE*** SIDE EFFECTS INVOLVED.

THIS PATIENT MUTATED BEYOND THE 'SUPER-HUMAN' PHASE, INTO SOMETHING TOO PRIMAL FOR THEM TO CONTROL. AND THOUGH THE STRENGTH AND PAIN THRESHOLDS ARE WAY BEYOND WHAT WE'D HOPED FOR... THE LOSS OF INTELLIGENCE RENDERED HIM USELESS.

SO? HOW DO YOU PLAN TO PROCEED?

HAVEN'T DECIDED. YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS?

WE NEED ANOTHER GENE.

EXACTLY.

AND IF WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE ANY MORE TIME... THERE'S ONLY ONE PLACE TO GET IT.

SHE WON'T SELL IT TO US, WYNN. YOU KNOW THAT. YOU'VE BEEN IN MEETINGS WITH HER.

YES-- AND HER REFUSAL ALWAYS STRUCK ME AS STRANGE.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN DATING HER NOW? WHAT IS IT? SEVEN... EIGHT MONTHS? HER COMPANY HAS CUTTING EDGE SCIENCE AT THEIR FINGERTIPS-- POSSIBLY THE ANSWER TO MOST OF OUR QUESTIONS-- AND YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO GET YOUR HANDS ON IT. WHY?

THAT'S NOT HOW IT WORKS. WE DON'T TALK BUSINESS WHEN WE'RE TOGETHER.

THEN YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DECIDE: WHAT'S MORE IMPORTANT... PROFESSOR GEBHARD... OR YOUR BUSINESS INTERESTS?

tek tek a tek teka tek tik tek tek tek teka

CLIK

87%

1/1 prz

100%

download complete

1/1 prz

KRAK

I'VE GOT IT.

NO. I MADE SURE I GOT EVERY-THING WE NEEDED.

IT JUST TOOK A LITTLE LONGER THAN ANTICIPATED.

CRASHH

SHUNK

KRAKOW

THE PENTAGON IS GOING TO BLOW A GASKET.

I'M SUPPOSED TO SHOWCASE THIS NEW WEAPON TO THEM-- IN THREE WEEKS! HOW'S THAT GOING TO HAPPEN NOW? YOU BLEW THIS ONE, KRAMER!

THEY'RE NEVER GOING TO GIVE US ANOTHER EXTENSION. NOT AFTER WE'VE SCREWED THEM EIGHT TIMES! I TOLD YOU... THEY'LL SHUT YOUR ASS DOWN IF YOU DON'T DELIVER.

I STUCK MY NECK OUT FOR YOU! *AND FOR WHAT?!* FIVE YEARS AND BILLIONS OF DOLLARS AND YOU CAN'T DEVELOP ANYTHING USEFUL FOR US?! HOW MANY GODDAMN FAILURES IS THIS NOW?

FORTY-SIX.

FORTY-SIX?!! CHRIST!

THAT'S IT-- YOU'RE DONE! AS SOON AS THEY FIND OUT YOU *F**KED THEM* AGAIN YOU'RE THROUGH! THERE WON'T *EVER* BE A PATIENT FORTY-SEVEN!

wrong.

"THEY WERE WRONG.

"NO WAY WAS I GOING TO STOP-- NOT WHEN I WAS SO CLOSE.

"NOT WHEN I COULD ALMOST TASTE IT!

"AND THOUGH THEY TOOK THE FACILITY-- AND MY RESEARCHERS-- AND MY CASH-- I MADE IT MY MISSION TO PERSONALLY MAKE SURE THERE WOULD BE..."

"...A PATIENT 47!"

"AND EVERY TIME I THINK ABOUT HIM-- ALL I FEEL IS PAIN. AND SUFFERING.

"BUT IT DOESN'T MATTER.

"I REMEMBER HIM. I CAN FEEL THAT HE'S OUT THERE. I KNOW HE IS.

"SOMEWHERE... PATIENT 47 IS STILL *ALIVE!*"

KEEP THE CROWD BACK!

THIS AREA NEEDS TO BE KEPT CLEAR!

MAKE SURE...

MY GOD!... *LOOK!*

HE'S UP!

HE'S NOT DEAD!--

HE'S ALIVE!

Next: **THE RESURRECTION**

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Golden
McFarlane
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PLEASE... TAKE A STEP BACK! WE CAN'T LET YOU THROUGH. WHAT WE NEED YOU TO DO IS GET OVER TO THE AMBULANCE AND LET THEM CHECK YOU OUT.

I TOLD YOU-- *I'M FINE!* I JUST WANT TO TALK TO THE GUY.

WE CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT! HE'S GOING TO THE SQUAD CAR AND YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO INTERACT WITH THE SUSPECT.

SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST RELAX AND LET THE DOCTORS TAKE A LOOK AT YOU?

POLICE DEPARTMENT CITY OF NEW YORK

ICE

I DON'T WANT A DOCTOR!

LISTEN, DOWNING-- YOU WERE SHOT! WE ALL SAW IT. I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU'RE EVEN STANDING BUT YOU NEED TO SIT DOWN AND TAKE A DEEP BREATH, UNTIL WE SORT THIS OUT.

OKAY! FINE! I'M DONE WITH ALL THIS! DO WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO.

POLICE

BUT I'M NOT HANGING AROUND HERE.

MR. DOWNING?! I'M ***SO*** SORRY, NOTHING LIKE THIS HAS ***EVER*** HAPPENED BEFORE! HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

pissed off.

NYPD

THAT'S UNDERSTANDABLE. BUT I THINK YOU SHOULD COME BACK INSIDE-- AWAY FROM THE CROWD.

GOOD IDEA.

NOT CROSS POLICE LINE DO NOT CR

JIM! HEY, JIM!! WAIT UP!

JIM!

SORRY, GUY, NO ONE'S ALLOWED PAST HERE! YOU NEED TO GO OUT THE FRONT...

I'M DOWNING'S MANAGER. I WAS IN THE GREEN ROOM WHEN THE SHOOTING STARTED. JUST LET ME...

I SAID NO ONE PASSES. THOSE ARE MY ORDERS.

Unh?... IT'S OKAY, OFFICER. HE'S WITH ME. LET HIM THROUGH.

MOMENTS LATER.

JESUS CHRIST, JIM! WHAT HAPPENED OUT THERE? I COULDN'T SEE BECAUSE THE SCREEN WENT FUZZY. IT LOOKED LIKE SOMEONE TRIED TO SHOOT YOU...!

BUT THAT'S CRAZY! WHY WOULD SOMEONE WANT TO DO THAT? YOU COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED! WHAT IF HE HIT YOU?

HE DID. TWICE.

WHAT?!

YOU TOOK TWO BULLETS?

YES. BUT I'M OKAY NOW. MY BODY... SOMEHOW IT HEALED ITSELF.

I GUESS MY POWERS WORK ON ME, TOO.

I WAS IN PAIN FOR A MINUTE THEN-- *POOF!* IT WAS GONE.

GREENWICH, CONNECTICUT

I'M IN NO MOOD FOR YOUR PETTY LITTLE GAMES.

SLAM

NICE ENTRANCE-- VERY DRAMATIC OF YOU.

AND YOUR SENSE OF TIMING IS IMPECCABLE. I WAS JUST FINISHING UP MY TALK WITH YOUR DOG FRIEND HERE. HE WAS INTERESTED IN KNOWING MY THOUGHTS ON THE TOPIC OF 'LOYALTY.'

BUT, AS YOU CAN SEE-- IT WAS A BIT OF A ***ONE-SIDED*** CONVERSATION.

NEW YORK POLICE DEPARTMENT · PRECINCT 23

EXCUSE ME! OUT OF MY WAY... PLEASE!

TWITCH!

WERE YOU WATCHING? DID YOU SEE?! THEY SAID HE GOT SHOT AND NOW HE'S WALKING AROUND LIKE...

QUIET!

I SAW IT-- NOW LET ME HEAR WHAT THEY'RE SAYING!

HE JUST LAID THERE. I COULDN'T TELL IF HE WAS MOVING OR NOT, THE CROWD AND THE POLICE WERE BLOCKING MY VIEW. BUT THEN... I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES... HE JUST GOT UP.

HE HAD BLOOD ALL OVER HIM AND THEN THE POLICE PUSHED US AWAY. PEOPLE WERE SCREAMING...

TWITCH, WE NEED TO GET DOWN THERE!

NO.

I KNOW DOWNING-- HE'LL BE GONE BY THE TIME WE GET THERE. WE'D BE WASTING OUR TIME. BESIDES, TRYING TO FIGURE THIS MESS OUT IS GIVING ME A HEADACHE.

C.I.A. HEADQUARTERS.

I HOPE YOU'VE GOT YOUR BOYS ALL OVER THIS DOWNING FIASCO! WE NEED TO CONTAIN THIS! EVERY NEWS ORGANIZATION IN THE WORLD'S COVERING IT!

WE'RE ON IT.

I BET IT WAS ONE OF OUR MIDDLE EAST FRIENDS TRYING TO SCREW US.

WE DON'T THINK SO.

...THERE WAS A LOUD SOUND, THEN THE PLATE GLASS EXPLODED! I HEARD... I THINK ABOUT THREE SHOTS...

... I CAN'T BE SURE WITH ALL THE TRAFFIC NOISE BEHIND US. BUT THE GUY WHO DID IT WAS ONLY ABOUT TEN FEET FROM US... WE DIDN'T KNOW... THEN WE SAW HIS GUN. THAT'S WHEN WE TRIED TO GET OUT OF THERE...

THEN FIND OUT WHICH DIPLOMATIC SLEAZEBALL ***BETRAYED US!*** THIS COULD CRIPPLE YOUR SET-UP WITH THAT REPORTER-- THE ROSEN KID. HE STILL HASN'T GIVEN YOU HIS TRUST YET, HAS HE?

HE'S STILL ON THE FENCE, BUT HE'LL COME AROUND. STRANGELY... THIS SHOOTING MIGHT BE THE CATALYST THAT HOOKS HIM FOR US.

AN OHIO HIGHWAY.

WE CAN CONSOLIDATE YOUR DEBT AND WORK WITH YOUR CREDITORS TO HELP CREATE A MONTHLY PAYMENT THAT IS MANAGEABLE-- SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?

CALL NOW AND ONE OF OUR REPRESENTATIVES WILL WALK YOU THROUGH OUR EASY THREE-STEP PROGRAM TO A MORE SECURE AND STRESS-FREE LIFE.

WELCOME BACK, EVERYONE. WE CONTINUE TO BRING YOU UP TO THE MINUTE REPORTS ON THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION, IN NEW YORK CITY, OF JIM DOWNING. POLICE HAVE YET TO RELEASE THE NAME OF THE ASSAILANT OR ANY INFORMATION ON A POSSIBLE MOTIVE.

IN A FEW MOMENTS WE'LL BRING IN TWO GUESTS THAT ARE FORMER INVESTIGATORS WITH THE N.Y.P.D.

PA 2
Erie 20
Buffalo 100

WE DON'T HAVE THE STAFF TO COVER FOR YOU, SO I'M SORRY YOU'LL HAVE TO STAY FOR THE REST OF YOUR SHIFT.

I TOLD YOU I NEED TO LEAVE! AN EMERGENCY HAS COME UP!

I UNDER-STAND, BUT WE'RE SHORT TODAY, AND I CAN'T MAKE ANY EXCEPTIONS BECAUSE...

THEN I QUIT!

I DON'T NEED A JOB LIKE THIS! ALL YOUR DUMB RULES!! AND ***THESE HATS*** YOU MAKE US WEAR?! WE'RE NOT LIVING IN THE FIFTIES ANYMORE-- WHEN ARE YOU GUYS GOING WAKE UP?!

THE TARGET IS LEAVING THE BUILDING.

TELL THE VATICAN THAT OUR OPERATION WITH MISS JOHNSTON IS GOING ACCORDING TO PLAN.

THIRTY-SIX YEARS I'VE BEEN AT THIS. THIRTY-SIX!

AND IN ALL THAT TIME I AIN'T *EVER* SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS.

BUT IF YOU INSIST YOU'RE NOT IN PAIN, I CAN'T KEEP YOU AGAINST YOUR WILL. YOU'RE FREE TO GO IF YOU WANT.

EMS PARAMEDIC CITY OF NEW YORK

FINALLY! WE'RE IN AGREEMENT ON SOMETHING. I APPRECIATE YOU DOING YOUR JOB, BUT YOU CAN WRITE IN YOUR REPORT THAT YOU DID YOUR TESTS AND NOTHING WAS WRONG.

THAT'S WHAT'S GOT MY HEAD SPINNING. TWO DIRECT HITS TO YOUR CHEST AND HEART AREA, AND THE WORST I FIND IS A COUPLE WELTS.

IT DEFIES LOGIC.

EMS PARAMEDIC CITY OF NEW YORK

YEAH?... WELL, WELCOME TO MY WORLD.

C'MON JIM, LET'S GO. THEY NEED US UPSTAIRS TO FINALIZE A COUPLE THINGS BEFORE WE LEAVE.

ARE THESE THE DOORS TO GET INTO THE BUILDING?

YEAH. THE COPS AREN'T LETTING ANYONE THROUGH THE FRONT.

I WAS SURPRISED WHEN YOU CALLED ME. I THOUGHT YOU'D HAVE BEEN LONG GONE BY NOW.

I'M DONE RUNNING.

SO?... YOU SAID MY PRINTS CAME BACK?

THEY DID-- YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LIKE THE RESULTS.

HUMOR ME.

ACCORDING TO OUR FINDINGS, YOU'RE A COMPOSITE OF TEN DIFFERENT PEOPLE. LIKE SOME MODERN DAY FRANKENSTEIN.

YOU'RE KIDDING... RIGHT?

THIS SHOULDN'T COME AS ANY GREAT SURPRISE. I MEAN THINK ABOUT IT, YOU HAVE THE SPAWN POWERS, A 'HEALING TOUCH' AND NOW, IT APPEARS, SELF-GENERATING ABILITIES. JUST THAT ON ITS OWN WOULD BOGGLE THE MIND.

SO WHY WOULD THE FACT YOU HAVE TEN DIFFERENT FINGERPRINTS COMPLICATE THINGS ANY FURTHER? FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, YOU'RE A COMPLETE ENIGMA.

HOW DO YOU KNOW I'M NOT ONE OF THE IDENTITIES OF ONE OF THE PRINTS?

ALREADY THOUGHT OF THAT-- BUT ***EVERY PRINT*** BELONGED TO A DEAD MURDERER AND ALL OF THEM DIED IN PRISON. I EVEN GOT VERIFICATION ALL THE BODIES ARE STILL AT THEIR LOCAL MORGUES. AND NONE DIED ON THE DAY YOU CAME OUT OF YOUR COMA.

I HAVE TO TELL YOU, I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO GO FROM HERE.

JIM...!

OH MY GOD! YOU'RE OKAY! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT-- *I WAS SO AFRAID!*

I... I'M SORRY... I DIDN'T MEAN TO INTERRUPT YOUR CONVERSATION.

IT'S FINE. WE WERE JUST FINISHING UP. I'LL CALL YOU LATER, TWITCH. I HAVE A COUPLE OTHER IDEAS.

I'LL BE AT THE PRECINCT.

YOU'RE SURE YOU'RE OKAY?

I THINK SO. THE MEDICS AREN'T SAYING OTHERWISE.

EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT YOU! YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU? ALL THE NEWS CHANNELS. THE INTERNET. ***EVERYONE.*** IT'S NOT JUST YOUR HEALING-- NOW THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT YOUR 'RESURRECTION.' THEY THINK YOU'RE... A ***GOD.***

MARC SHOULD HAVE TOLD YOU.

HE PROBABLY TRIED, BUT HE WENT TO THE ROOF TO MAKE A CALL.

WHAT!? *THAT* ***BASTARD!*** HOW COULD HE LEAVE YOU AT A TIME LIKE THIS?

I JUST WANT TO KNOW-- WHY DIDN'T YOU STOP THIS? YOU SAID YOU COULD PROTECT US.

THAT DIDN'T WORK TOO WELL FOR YOU, DID IT?

THE SHOOTER... HE WASN'T A PART OF THIS. HE'S A ROGUE. NO ONE KNOWS WHO HE IS, BUT I'VE GOT HALF A DOZEN PEOPLE ON IT. I'LL GET YOU SOME ANSWERS SOON. IN THE MEANTIME, YOU NEED TO TAKE JIM HOME WITH YOU AND STAY THERE. MY PEOPLE WILL FOLLOW YOU TO MAKE SURE NO ONE HASSLES YOU.

THAT INCLUDES THE MEDIA AND THE AUTHORITIES. WE'LL MAKE SURE ANYONE WHO NEEDS TO GET TO YOU HAS BEEN FULLY CHECKED OUT. CHAOTIC SHIT LIKE THIS MAKES PEOPLE TAKE THEIR EYES OFF THE ***REAL GAME***.

ALL RIGHT, BUT THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE.

I CAN'T LOSE YOU.

I'M NOT GOING ANY-WHERE.

I... NEED... YOU.

NO!

WE'RE NOT GOING TO DO THIS! I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT... I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN AND LETTING ME STAY WITH YOU AND MARC, BUT I'M NOT GOING TO BETRAY THAT FRIENDSHIP.

IT'S TOO LATE FOR THAT, ISN'T IT?

WHAT'S WRONG, I'M NOT ***YOUR TYPE?*** NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU? MAYBE I SHOULD BECOME A NURSE-- LIKE SARA! SEEMS LIKE YOU'RE WILLING TO ***F**K HER*** ALL YOU WANT, BUT YOU WON'T ***F**K ME*** ANYMORE!!

WHOA...! EASY NOW!

THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH SARA. I'M JUST NOT READY TO...

BULLSHIT! THIS HAS *EVERY-THING* TO DO WITH HER! YOU'RE JUST THE LAST ONE TO REALIZE IT!

BUT THIS ISN'T OVER!

NOT BY A LONG SHOT!

SLAM

GUESS I MIGHT AS WELL SEE WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING...

...AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT FROM THE VATICAN IS CALLING FOR CAUTION IN LIGHT OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING MR. DOWNING. THE RELEASE STATES:

"WHILE THE WORLD HAS BORNE WITNESS TO THE MIRACLES PERFORMED BY AN INDIVIDUAL OF PARTICULAR INTEREST, WE MUST BE SURE TO ASCERTAIN THE VALIDITY OF THESE ACTS BEFORE OUR GRANDEST HOPES CAN BE PROVEN TRUE."

BY ALL ACCOUNTS-- FROM EYEWITNESSES, TO THE DETAILS PROVIDED BY THE MEDICAL STAFF WHO EXAMINED MR. DOWNING ON-SCENE AND THE ARRESTING OFFICERS WHO APPREHENDED THE ATTACKER-- THIS WAS NO HOAX. MR. DOWNING WAS INDEED SHOT WITH LIVE ROUNDS. AND HIS WOUNDS APPEARED TO BE VERY REAL BEFORE HIS 'MIRACULOUS' RECOVERY.

THIS EVENT-- THE ATTACK ON HIS LIFE AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, MR. DOWNING'S SUBSEQUENT RECOVERY-- HAS ONLY SERVED TO FURTHER IGNITE A FIRESTORM OF MEDIA AND PUBLIC INTEREST WHICH WAS ALREADY SURGING AS A RESULT OF HIS OTHER RECENT ACTIVITIES.

THE MYSTERIOUS ***JIM DOWNING*** HAS DONE IT AGAIN, FOLKS. FIRST HE COMES OUT OF NOWHERE WITH A STORY ***SO INTRIGUING*** WE COULDN'T LOOK AWAY-- A COMA PATIENT WAKES WITH NO ***MEMORY*** AND NO ONE WHO ***REMEMBERS*** HIM, THEN STRUTS AROUND TOWN WITH THE POWERS OF A ***HEALING ANGEL*** AND THE DISHEVELED GOOD LOOKS OF AN ***UNDERWEAR MODEL.***

NOW, JUST AS HE PROMISED TO USE HIS GIFTS FOR THE ***GOOD*** OF ***ALL MANKIND,*** A HORRIFIC BURST OF VIOLENT ***AGGRESSION*** STRIKES HIM DOWN. WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN A TRAGEDY, THOUGH, INSTEAD BECAME AN OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR NEW-FOUND HERO TO INSPIRE HOPE IN US ALL ***ONCE AGAIN!***

WE ARE WITNESSING A ***MIRACLE,*** PEOPLE. I HOPE YOU'RE ENJOYING IT WHILE YOU CAN-- I KNOW I AM-- BECAUSE WE MAY NEVER SEE SOMETHING LIKE HIM AGAIN IN OUR LIFETIMES. HIS PRESENCE HAS GRIPPED, NOT ONLY US HERE IN AMERICA, BUT THE ENTIRE WORLD TOO. THE WAVE OF "JIM-SANITY" IS WASHING OVER ALL OF US.

VIOLENCE FOLLOWS THIS MAN EVERYWHERE HE GOES. ***WHY IS THAT?*** IS HE JUST AN ***INNOCENT VICTIM--*** A LOST SOUL WITH ***INCREDIBLE*** GIFTS HOUNDED BY THE MEDIA AND IMPOSSIBLE ***EXPECTATIONS?*** OR... IS HE HIS ***OWN WORST ENEMY? FLAUNTING*** HIS ***GOOD LOOKS.*** PLAYING ***CAT AND MOUSE*** WITH THE ***PRESS--*** ONE DAY HE'S TRYING TO AVOID ***OUR RIGHTS*** AS ***JOURNALISTS*** TO KNOW AND REPORT ***THE TRUTH,*** THE NEXT HE'S HOLDING ***PRESS*** CONFERENCES... ***DESPERATELY*** SEEKING OUR ***ATTENTION--*** THE ***WORLD'S*** ATTENTION-- FOR WHATEVER HIS ***NEXT*** GOAL MAY BE.

AND TODAY, ***WHAT*** DID WE GET? ***ANOTHER*** TELEVISED MIRACLE? ***ANOTHER*** SHOW FOR OUR EYES AND SENSES? ***I DOUBT IT!*** MR. DOWNING'S "MAGIC" POWERS ARE, IF YOU ASK ***ME,*** MORE LIKE THE "MAN BEHIND THE CURTAIN" FROM WIZARD OF OZ-- ***ALL HYPE*** AND ***NO SUBSTANCE--*** A ***DOG AND PONY SHOW*** PULLING THE ***WOOL*** OVER THE LAME STREAM MEDIA'S EYES WITH FLASH AND ***SHOCK VALUE.*** BUT NOT ***MINE. I'M*** TELLING YOU ***I*** SEE THROUGH THIS GUY AND HIS MANIPULATIONS.

I'M NOT BUYING IT!

THE REAL STORY HERE **ISN'T** HIS "GOD-LIKE" ACTIONS-- TRUST ME ON THIS-- IT'S HIS "**CHARITABLE**" **FOUNDATION!** WHO'S SUPPLYING THE **FUNDING** FOR THAT SHAM? DOWNING DIDN'T START IT FOR FREE, SO ***WHERE'D HE GET THE CASH?*** WHO'S PULLING HIS ***STRINGS?*** THAT'S THE ***REAL*** QUESTION.

THUDD

Unh...?

CLOWN-- WHAT THE HELL?

IT'S HAPPENING.

JUST LIKE I SAID... ⇢huff⇠...

WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WHAT'S HAPPENING?!

HIS RETRIBUTION-- IT'S BEGUN-- SOONER THAN I'D THOUGHT! I TRIED TO ESCAPE...⇒huff⇐... BUT HE FOLLOWED ME.

EVEN IN THE SHADOWS I... COULDN'T LOSE HIM!

LOSE WHO?

MALEBOLGIA!

HE FOLLOWED ME! BUT WE'RE-- NOT READY!

IT'S TOO SOON... IT'S WAY... TOO... SOON.

LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON WITH YOU, BUT YOU NEED TO RELAX-- NO ONE'S HERE. IT'S JUST YOU AND I.

SADLY, DOWNING...

THAT ISN'T TRUE!

NEXT ISSUE:

MY MAKER... MY MASTER!

20TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2012

YOU GOING TO JUST STAND THERE STARING ME DOWN?

YOU DON'T REALLY BELIEVE YOU HAVE A CHANCE AGAINST ME, DO YOU? I DIDN'T THINK I MADE YOU SPAWN'S *THAT* STUPID.

YOU ***DIDN'T*** MAKE ME.

THAT'S YOUR FIRST MISTAKE. SO, IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO GET OFF YOUR CHEST-- I'M RIGHT HERE.

OTHERWISE GET THE HELL OUT OF MY FACE!

DO NOT... ***TEMPT ME!***

I'LL DO MORE THAN THAT.

SEE, YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE HERE WITH POWERS.

LET IT GO!! GODAMMIT, LET IT GO!

YOU DON'T WANT *THIS FIGHT*, JIM -- NOT LIKE THIS! ***NOT HERE!*** YOU'LL TAKE OUT THIS BUILDING AND HALF THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

YOU'LL KILL MARC AND SUSAN!

I'LL LET FREAK DECIDE THAT.

YOU'RE BLUFFING.

TRY ME.

LISTEN TO ME!... HE'S MISSING A PIECE OF HIS POWER. HE'S NOT AT *FULL STRENGTH!* THIS COULD BE OUR ONLY CHANCE!

*Issue 215-- Todd

YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO *TRUST ME* ON THIS ONE! HE'S TRYING TO GOAD YOU INTO SOMETHING!

DON'T LET HIM!

WE CAN LOSE HIM...

IN THE SHADOWS.

QUICKLY...

...THE MORE PLACES WE TOUCH...

...THE HARDER IT'LL BE FOR HIM...

TODAY
HAUNT

TODAY
HAUNT

...TO PICK UP OUR SCENT.

WHERE'RE WE HEADING?

DOESN'T MATTER.

JUST KEEP MOVING WITHIN THE SHADOWS. MALEBOLGIA CAN'T SPAN THE DISTANCES YOU AND YOUR COSTUME CAN.

AND HE SURE AS HELL CAN'T TRACK *BOTH OF US* AT ONCE-- NOT IF WE SPLIT UP. HE'S TOO WEAK.

SO YOU NEED TO DO ME A FAVOR-- NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS-- KEEP HIM AWAY FROM ME FOR TWENTY MINUTES. THIS IS GOING TO BE THE ONLY CHANCE I'LL HAVE TO GET WHAT I NEED. CAN YOU DO THAT?

SURE...

...BUT WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO GET?

東京

東京

CLOWN?

YOU THERE?

WHERE IS HE!?

WHERE ARE YOU *HIDING* CLOWN?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE... TALKING ABOUT.

WHAT DID HE TELL YOU? THAT I'M WEAK? THAT I DON'T HAVE THE POWER TO *CRUSH YOU* RIGHT HERE?

THAT I COULDN'T TRACK YOU HERE TO JAPAN? IS THAT WHAT HE'S TELLING YOU?

LET ME SHOW YOU HOW FAST I TRAVEL IN THE DARKNESS AND HOW *UNAFRAID* I AM OF BOTH OF YOU!

HERE...

I'LL EVEN DO IT ON YOUR *HOME* TURF!

IN THE *SAME GARBAGE* SIMMONS USED TO CRAWL IN!

Simmons...

IS DEAD!!

KRASHH

YOU HAVE TO DEAL WITH ME NOW!

NO I DON'T. BECAUSE I *ALREADY* CONTROL YOU!

YOUR COSTUME-- I *CREATED* AND *OWN* IT! NOT YOU!

THAT'S WHY IT WON'T HURT ME. WHY IT WON'T LISTEN TO YOUR COMMANDS.

BECAUSE IT KNOWS WHO ITS *REAL* MASTER IS!

AND AS MUCH AS YOU THINK YOU'RE A *SPAWN*...

Shinkk

I'M THE ONE THAT CONTROLS ITS POWERS!

SO I'LL ASK YOU AGAIN... *WHERE'S* CLOWN?

YOU SEE, HE TOOK SOMETHING THAT DIDN'T BELONG TO HIM. BUT I GUESS HE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT-- DIDN'T HE?

CATHEDRAL HOSPITAL

HELLO, SAM.

I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR PROTECTING MY TREASURE.

BUT I NEED IT BACK NOW.

ummphff...!

BE EEEP BEEEP

BEE EEP

BEEEP

ALARM

CODE RED! WE HAVE A CODE RED IN ROOM 215! I'M GETTING A DOCTOR!

CINDY!-- PATIENT'S E.K.G. IS CRASHING!

HE'S ABOUT TO *FLAT-LINE!*

GOT IT!

ADIOS, FAT MAN.

WHERE'S THE DOCTOR?!

ON HIS WAY!

BEGIN C.P.R.-- WE CAN'T WAIT FOR THE CRASH CART!

EEEE

SHKAMM

BEFORE GETTING UP-- YOU MAY WANT TO PAY ATTENTION TO HOW YOU LOOK.

WHAT'D YOU DO? TELL YOUR COSTUME *TO HIDE?*

NO. I DIDN'T HAVE TO.

BUT YOU WOULDN'T KNOW THAT BECAUSE YOU'VE NO IDEA WHERE YOU ARE, DO YOU? WELL, LET ME ENLIGHTEN YOU-- IT'S CALLED THE ***DEAD ZONE***. THERE'S A HANDFUL OF THEM. THEY'RE THE SPOTS WHERE GOD PLACES MY DEMONS AND MY SPAWNS BACK ON EARTH.

I GET THE SOUL, BUT HEAVEN CHOOSES THE DESTINATION. AND TO BALANCE IT ALL-- THE OPPOSITE OCCURS WITH HEAVEN'S SOULS-- I GET TO PLACE THEM WHEREVER I WANT, GLOBALLY.

THE CRUEL TWIST IS THAT EACH SPOT COMPLETELY ***ELIMINATES*** ALL OF A SOUL'S POWER AS LONG AS THEY ARE WITHIN THE ZONE. LIKE YOU ARE NOW.

I GUESS THAT MEANS YOU'RE AFRAID OF ME... RIGHT? I MEAN, WHY ELSE WOULD YOU NEED TO STRIP MY POWERS?

UNLESS YOU'RE SCARED?

THE WAY CLOWN WAS TALKING-- HE SAID YOU COULD RULE THIS PLANET YOURSELF. BUT HOW'S THAT POSSIBLE WHEN YOU DON'T *HAVE THE GUTS* TO STAND UP TO ME?

I BET YOU CAN'T EVEN CONTROL WHO YOU ARE! ARE YOU THE FREAK? ARE YOU MALEBOLGIA? OR SOME HALF-BREED PRETENDING TO BE TOUGHER THAN YOU REALLY ARE?

SO WHAT'D'YA SAY? WHY DON'T YOU COME JOIN ME IN THIS 'DEAD ZONE' INSTEAD OF COWERING OUTSIDE IT?

THAT'S MY *BIG GIRL!*

YOU DON'T CONTROL *ANY-THING!* DO YOU? ESPECIALLY THE COSTUME!

TELL ME THE TRUTH!

IF YOU DID, YOU'D HAVE MADE IT ATTACK ME!

OR *SUFFOCATE ME?* OR *STRANGLE ME?* ANYTHING!

THAT'S BECAUSE I WANTED TO...

DO IT **MYSELF!!**

THUD

FREAK...

...WE AREN'T *DONE* YET!

NEXT: WINGS OF REDEMPTION

20TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2012

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1992-2012
image
219
DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN

Golden
McFarlane

sniff sniff

FREAK...

...WE AREN'T *DONE* YET!

IN FACT--

I'M JUST GETTING **WARMED UP!**

GOOD! I DIDN'T WANT YOU DYING SO EASILY.*

*See last issue--Todd

DYING SEEMS TO BE *NEAR* IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME. BUT YOU ALREADY KNEW THAT.

AND YOU ALSO KNEW YOU WERE *NEVER* GOING TO CONTROL ME! I CAN FEEL YOUR PANIC FROM HERE!

SO...

...HOW DO YOU WANT TO END THIS?

THE SAME WAY I DO ALL MY VICTORIES. BY SLAUGHTERING MY ENEMY!

THAT'S YOUR BEST THREAT?

NO!

BUT YOUR ARROGANCE IS BLINDING YOU TO THE HARSH REALITY THAT YOUR POWERS *ARE FLEETING!* THEY WON'T LAST!

THEN *DO SOMETHING* ABOUT IT!

STOP TALKING! GO AHEAD-- TAKE YOUR BEST SHOT!

YOU'RE HESITATING--

WHY?!

BECAUSE SOMETHING'S WRONG. LOOK AT YOU! THOSE WINGS-- THE POWER YOU'RE FEELING-- THOSE ARE HEAVEN'S, NOT YOURS.

I'VE SEEN ANGELS A THOUSAND TIMES. AND I'VE DESTROYED EVERY ONE OF THEM! BUT NONE OF THEM RETAINED THEIR WINGS WHILE STANDING IN A 'DEAD ZONE'.

GOD'S DEFYING THE ***RULES***... LIKE HE ALWAYS DOES! IF YOU HUMANS ONLY KNEW HOW DECEPTIVE HE WAS-- HOW MANIPULATIVE HE CAN BE TOWARDS HIS OWN GOALS, YOU'D SHUT DOWN EVERY CHURCH AND CAST HIM OUT AS A TRAITOR.

INSTEAD, HIS SPELL OVER THIS PLANET'S RELIGIONS... BLINDS YOU INTO IGNORING ACTUAL FACTS!

SO LET'S AT LEAST ***LEVEL*** THE PLAYING FIELD...

...AND SEE IF WHATEVER IS GIVING YOU YOUR POWERS APPLIES TO THE *REST OF US!*

BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO THINK GOD IS SELFISH ENOUGH TO COMPLETELY DEFY ALL OF OUR AGREED TO PROVISIONS.

FOR IT'S BEEN WRITTEN THAT "WHATEVER GIFTS SHALL BE GIVEN TO THE LORD'S CHILDREN, SHALL ALSO BENEFIT THE CHILDREN OF DARKNESS AND THEIR MASTERS."

MEANING THIS 'DEAD ZONE' SHOULD STRENGTHEN ME TOO.

no?!

my horns... they're gone!

GOD'S BROKEN THE PACT.

HE'S JUST DECLARED *WAR* UPON HIMSELF!

I DON'T CARE!

NOT ABOUT HIM! *OR YOU!*

ALL I GIVE A DAMN ABOUT IS GETTING YOU AWAY FROM EARTH.

FOOSH

EVEN IF I HAVE TO DO IT *MYSELF!*

YOU WANT YOUR *DAMN* HORNS BACK?

YOU'VE GOT 'EM!

BUT IT'S YOUR LUNGS YOU SHOULD BE WORRIED ABOUT!

I'M BETTING THE 'FREAK' PART OF YOU DOESN'T LIKE THE THIN AIR UP HERE, DOES HE?

gasp!

DIDN'T THINK SO.

NOW BEFORE I KILL YOU-- ANSWER ME SOMETHING. WHAT DID YOU MEAN WHEN YOU SAID "GOD'S CHILDREN?" WHY'D YOU RECITE *THAT* PHRASE?

BECAUSE I NOW RECOGNIZE WHO YOU ARE. AND YOU'RE RIGHT... I DIDN'T CREATE YOU. BUT THOSE THAT DID KNEW THEY MADE A MISTAKE. KNEW YOU COULDN'T BE TRUSTED.

THAT'S WHY THEY ***BANISHED YOU!*** WHY THEY THREW YOU ***OUT*** OF HEAVEN!

YOU TRIED TO MURDER HIM! DON'T YOU REMEMBER? THEY TOLD ME YOU GRABBED HIS NECK-- *LIKE THIS!* THINKING YOU COULD SLIT HIS THROAT WITH YOUR KNIFE. BUT HE DIDN'T DIE, *DID HE?* DID HE?! EVEN AFTER YOU SLICED HIM OPEN. HE WOULDN'T *DIE*-- AND THAT MADE YOU EVEN *MORE INSANE*-- MORE IRRATIONAL THAN YOU'D ALREADY BECOME.

BUT YOU DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY OF THIS. BECAUSE NOW THAT YOU'RE AWAKE, YOUR SOUL'S BEEN HIDING THE TRUTH FROM YOU.

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! WHO'D I TRY TO KILL?

THINK...!

WHEN YOU WERE IN A COMA-- WHERE WAS YOUR *SOUL?* WHAT WAS IT DOING ALL THOSE YEARS?

IT WAS PLANNING. SCHEMING!

AND WHEN THE TIME CAME, YOU TRIED TO *MURDER* GOD!

"BUT YOU FAILED! YOU KNOW WHY?

"BECAUSE HE'S A GOD! YOU CAN'T KILL US THAT WAY! THAT'S NOT HOW IT WORKS! WE LORD OVER YOU-- WE HAVE THE POWER! NOT YOU!

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"AFTER YOU FAILED, INSTEAD OF DESTROYING YOU-- HE OFFERED HELL A DEAL! YOUR SOUL IN RETURN FOR A THOUSAND OTHERS THAT SATAN HAD TAKEN AWAY FROM GOD UPON THEIR DEATHS.

"AND THOUGH YOU DON'T LOOK THE SAME AS YOU DID THEN... I REMEMBER SEEING YOU AND HOW, FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, YOU MADE EYE CONTACT WITH THE SOUL OF AL SIMMONS.

"IT WAS THAT MOMENT WHEN I BEGAN PLANNING FOR MY OWN DEATH. BECAUSE I KNEW THAT A SOUL SO CORRUPT AS YOURS, THAT IT WOULD TRY TO SLAUGHTER GOD IN HIS OWN HEAVEN, WOULD EASILY BE ABLE TO SPREAD THAT EVIL TO OTHERS.

"SO I SCATTERED MY POWERS-- HIDING THEM IN A HANDFUL OF THE COUNTLESS SOULS IN MY DOMAIN. SIMMONS THOUGHT HE'D KILLED ME. NO-- HE ONLY DELAYED ME."*

* Issue #100-- Todd

YOU TALK TOO MUCH.

NO.

YOU'RE NOT GETTING OFF THAT EASY. THIS TIME WE'RE GOING TWICE AS HIGH BEFORE I DROP YOU.

I WANT IT TO *REALLY* HURT!

YOU BRING THIS KIND OF ATTENTION TO YOURSELF -- THE HUMANS WILL HUNT YOU DOWN!

SWOOK

ARE YOU *INSANE?!*

NO THEY WON'T! BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW WE'RE HERE. THEY CAN'T SEE OUR POWERS!

CLOWN TOLD ME ANYTHING COMING FROM THE "DEAD ZONE" IS INVISIBLE TO MANKIND... SO STOP WITH THE SCARE TACTICS. IT'S BENEATH YOU!

WHICH TELLS ME EVERYTHING I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOU AND YOUR CURRENT CONDITION. CLOWN SAID YOU HAD THE POWER TO CONQUER EARTH-- BUT IF YOU DID, YOU'D HAVE USED IT BY NOW! YOU'RE WEAK! THAT MEANS **YOU'RE F**KED!** SO LET ME DO A LITTLE TALKING HERE...

THIS COSTUME YOU CREATED-- IT HATES YOU! IT HATES YOU SO MUCH THAT SOMEHOW IT'S TRYING TO TELL ME HOW TO KILL YOU! YOU UNDERSTAND THAT? YOUR OWN CREATION WANTS TO KILL YOU! AND IF WHAT YOU'RE TELLING ME HAS ANY TRUTH TO IT-- THEN THINK WHAT THAT COMBO MEANS!

I TRIED TO KILL GOD AND YOUR COSTUME **WANTS TO KILL YOU!** TOGETHER WE DON'T GIVE A SHIT ABOUT EITHER HEAVEN OR HELL-- WE'RE HERE TO PROTECT EARTH!

AND NOW I KNOW **HOW** TO DO IT! BECAUSE THE COSTUME KNOWS YOUR SECRETS!

AND IT WANTS
REVENGE!!

THWAP
THWAP
THWAP
THWAP
THWAP

YOU'RE A FOOL, DOWNING...!

DOWNING'S GONE! I SENT HIM AWAY! IT'S JUST ME NOW... YOUR SYMBIOTE!

AND I KNOW HOW TO *EXTRACT YOU* FROM THAT BODY.

REMEMBER-- I WAS THE ONE THAT PUT YOUR EVIL INSIDE THE FREAK!*

SO EVEN WITHOUT SIMMONS I CAN TEAR IT BACK OUT OF YOU!!

LIKE *THIS!*

* Issue #73-- Todd

I SENT FREAK TO HELL! NOT YOU!! YOU DID NOTHING TO GET HIM THERE! ***THAT MAKES ME HIS MASTER!!*** YOUR MISTAKE WAS NOT FINDING OUT HOW HIS SOUL GOT TO YOU BEFORE USING IT. BUT TONIGHT IT ENDS!! ***THIS ALL ENDS!!***

YOU AREN'T GOING TO RULE THIS WORLD!

AND NEITHER IS CLOWN!

IT'S MINE!! UNDER-STAND? THIS WORLD WILL BE MINE!

DOWNING IS JUST A MEANS TO GET THERE.

WHOMP

AND HIS SOUL HOLDS **THE KEY** TO GETTING INTO HEAVEN.

THAT'S WHERE I'LL GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO GOD -- ***TO ASSASSINATE HIM!***

Hahahaheehaheee

THAT'S FUNNY... KILL GOD... NOT... *heeheeehaaheeee...* NOT YOU... THAT'S CRAZY...

AND IF YOU DID IT... YOU KNOW WHAT'LL HAPPEN? YOU KNOW WHO'LL COME BACK...

SIMMONS.

IT'S SIMMONS.

AND HE'LL COME... LOOKING FOR YOU.

heeheeeeheeeeee

THEN LET HIM COME!

LET THEM ALL COME! BECAUSE--NO ONE IS GOING TO STOP THIS SPAWN EVER AGAIN!!

TO BE CONTINUED...